THE ÆTHIOP;

OR,

THE CHILD OF THE DESERT:

A ROMANTIC PLAY,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY WILLIAM DIMOND,

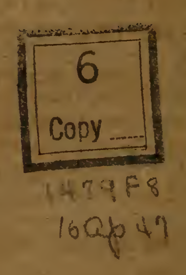
AUTHOR OF "HUNTER OF THE ALPS,"—"ADRIAN AND ORRILA,"—"HERO OF THE NORTH,"—"PEASANT BOY," &c. &c.

[*from the first London edition, of* 1812.]

NEW-YORK:

PUBLISHED BY D. LONGWORTH.
At the Dramatic Repository,
Shakspeare-Gallery.

March.—1813.


6
Copy

PREFACE.

The play of the Æthiop was accepted by the public without a single dissenting voice, and I have every reason to believe their applause has been fully commensurate with its merits.

The adventures which I have ascribed to *Haroun Alraschid* in the present drama, are precisely such, as the historians and poets of his own time and country, have stamped with unequivocal authority.

The comic underplot, is derived from a merry little french tale among "*Les Gages Touches*."

WILLIAM DIMOND.

October, 15*th*, 1812.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

	Covent-garden.
The Æthiop,	*Mr. C. Kemble,*
Almanzor, *an arabian sage,*	— *Young,*
Orasmyn, *nephew to Almanzor,*	— *Booth,*
Giafar, *a vizier,*	— *Egerton,*
Nourreddin,	— *Duruset,*
Aladin,	— *Treby,*
Caled, *an arab slave,*	— *Jefferies,*
Mustapha, *an emir,*	— *Simmons,*
Benmoussaff, *a cadi,*	— *Liston,*
Alexis, *greek christians,*	— *Fawcett,*
Constantine, *greek christians,*	— *Broadhurst,*
Cephania, *niece to Almanzor, and wife to the caliph,*	*Mrs. H. Johnstone,*
Immyne,	*Miss Logan,*
Grimnigra, *wife to Mustapha,*	*Mrs. Davenport,*
Grumnildra, *wife to Benmoussaff,*	*Miss Leserve,*
Zoe, *wife to Alexis,*	*Mrs. C. Kemble,*

SCENE—Bagdat.

The music by mr. Bishop.

THE ÆTHIOP;

OR,

THE CHILD OF THE DESERT.

ACT I.

SCENE I—*a spacious terrace in front of the seraglio, overlooking the river Tigris, the opposite bank of which is seen at a distance, crowned with mosques and minarets—the gate of the palace opens, and several guards rush forth confusedly dragging forward a sentinel—an officer follows, who in one hand holds a scroll, and with the other menaces the sentinel—citizens of Bagdat, male and female, enter from all sides and surround the tumult with expressions of curiosity.*

CHORUS.

Nour. Speak, caitiff, speak! what hand profane
Yon walls with treason dared to stain——
Who traced this scroll? who placed it there?
His name pronounce—his haunt declare!
Sent. I'm innocent—I know no more——
Off. Die! traitor, die!
Sent. I kneel—implore!
Citizens. Ah! whence this rage? why shakes that slave?
And what portends yon scroll, we crave?
Nour. A plot against the caliph's throne——
Speak, perjured slave! thy treasons own!
Sent. I'm innocent, by heaven! I swear——
All. To rack and fire the traitor bear!

GIAFAR *descends the terrace.*

Giaf. How now ! Nourreddin—whence this tumult ? even at the palace gate.

Nour. Illustrious Giafar ! behold this traitor and pronounce his doom. The western quadrangle of the palace this hour was his allotted watch, and now within its sacred precinct is this scroll discovered.

Giaf. (*unfolds it*) Ha ! what characters are these ? by hell ! the well know cypher of the fallen *Ali !* (*reads*) " People of Bagdat ! rejoice ! the hour of your deliv-" erance is nigh. Death to Haroun Alraschid—victo-" ry to the race of Ali, the only true believers !" detested treason ! wretch ! if racks can rend——

Sent. Giafar ! our caliph's chosen counsellor ! less dreaded for thy power, than reverenced for thy virtues ; deign to regard and trust thy kneeling slave ! by allah and the blessed tomb ! I swear—my watch hath faithfully been kept. No stranger's step hath crossed its limit—the caliph's best loved confidants alone have passed.

Nour. Yet to the centre pillar of the quadrangle, the scroll was fixed. Vizier ! pronounce his sentence—the torture quickly shall extort the truth !

Giaf. Nourreddin ! hold—let justice be severe, yet not precipitate—guard the suspected man, but forbear his life.

enter an IMAN *through the crowd.*

Iman. Where is the vizier ? conduct me to his presence.

Giaf. Abdallah ! why hast thou left the mosque ? are the holy rites so soon concluded ?

Iman. A pious horror shakes my aged frame. Alas ! the blasphemy of traitors hath transgressed the very sanctuary of our faith. Even now, before our altar the sultana knelt and offered vows for great Alraschid's safety ! lo from the body of the shrine a voice replied, " woman, thy prayer is vain ! the child of the desert shall reclaim his own !"

Giaf. Immortal prophet!—the palace and the mosque at once profaned! speak! what followed?

Iman. Consternation seized on all the listening crowd—the trembling priesthood left their rites unfinished—and now in terror the sultana hastens from the mosque.

Giaf. Allah! preserve the caliph! father of mercies! guard thine image upon earth!

Iman. To this report let stranger words be joined—in the old burial place of Ali's sect—a cursed ground—which good men's feet even by day avoid—at the dead hour of night, wild music hath been heard to float, and wandering torches have been seen to glide; if e'er some curious step approached to search the wonder, instant the chant was hushed, and each small fire would vanish.

Giaf. The times are peril fraught—but holy friend, learn we to meet their temper with an even courage. Nourreddin! to thy especial charge this evening I confide the city—at each gate let the guard be doubled, and see it straight proclaimed through Bagdat, that every citizen retire within his house at sun-set, and under pain of death, drive forth all strangers from his door. *(music sounds from the river)* Hark! the sultana's galley!

Nour. Returning from the mosque upon the Tigris' further bank, the glittering barque now cleaves the stream. *(music renewed—the galley rows in sight—guards form in lines before the palace gate—the people cluster about—an arab with an agitated air, advances from amidst the crowd)*

Arab. Now comes the moment to discharge my trust. *(he accosts a citizen)* Friend, will not the sultana return into the palace by this gate?

Cit. Assuredly. Therefore tis, the citizens thus throng to pay their homage.

Arab. Acquaint me, I beseech, which is the fitting post for such as would present petitions?

Cit. Here. to the left—some suitors are already stationed. When the sultana passes, kneel with the others and extend your paper.

Arab. Thanks for your counsel.

Giaf. (*to Nourreddin*) Mark yon stranger!—he who struggles now to reach the gate—his gestures are confused.

Nour. His garb bespeaks him of the desert—he sees that you observe him, and avoids your eye.

Giaf. (*aloud*) Arab! come forward. Would'st thou petition the sultana?

Arab. Yea, mighty Giafar! my boon is trifling, yet have I travelled far to crave it.

Giaf. Declare to me its purport.

Arab. Simply, the sultana's protection for merchants of our tribe, who fain would trade with Bagdat.

Giaf. Tis well—guards! make way for the stranger. Look that he approach the sultana freely.

Arab. I kiss the dust before your feet in homage. (*as the arab bends, a paper, unperceived by him, falls at Giafar's foot—a guard raises it*)

Giaf. Hold! you have dropped a paper—is it your petition?

Arab. (*starting wildly*) Ha! yes, yes—give it me—restore it——

Giaf. Such eagerness! give *me* the paper!

Arab. Distraction! ruin!

Giaf. (*glancing his eye over the contents*) Eternal providence! seize on that discovered fiend! (*guards surround the arab—shouts sound from the water-side*) the sultana lands—drag him aside! swift! swift! this way—follow me! (*Giafar rapidly darts down a colonnade—the arab is dragged after by guards—the prow of the galley presents itself upon the stage*—CEPHANIA *appears seated in state—surrounded by her women and pages*)

CHORUS.

Queen of the east! whose beauty
Kills envy with its blaze—
Thy slaves in pleasing duty,
Aspire to sing thy praise.

Live, of our earth the wonder !
While thou dost grace our sphere,
E'en gods might quit their thunder
To kneel in homage here !

(*in the course of the chorus the* SULTANA *descends—the different petitioners kneel—she receives their papers graciously, then passes them to her principal woman*—GIAFAR *returns as the chorus closes, leading forward the arab*)

Giaf. Now, slave, kneel and present thy paper—ay! that *very* paper !

Arab. Mercy ! mercy !

Giaf. Obey ! nay not one sign—or instant death.

Arab. Wretch that I am ! it must be so. (*he approaches Cephania—kneels with averted eyes, and silently extends the paper*)

Ceph. (*as she receives it*) Good fellow ! why dost thou tremble ? trust me, thy suit shall meet regard.

Arab. Ah ! sultana——

Giaf. (*interrupting*) The lustre of Cephania's eye hath dazzled monarchs—wherefore should she wonder that it awes a slave? Nourreddin! do thou conduct the stranger through the outer gates—(*aside*)—mark me —the deepest dungeon.

Arab. One word—one——

Giaf. (*aside in a low menacing tone*) Silence ! or thy death is instant.

Arab. Lost ! lost ! our cause is lost for ever !

[*exit with guards, gazing to the last upon Cephania*

Ceph. Giafar ! how earnestly did that poor arab fix his eyes on mine at parting ! surely no common suit could move him thus—Immyne ! preserve his paper separate from the rest, and let me read it when I reach my chamber.

Giaf. Queen of the east ! the caliph watches your return from mosque, and trusts a prosperous omen crowns your vows.

Ceph. The mosque ! ah, Giafar—a fatal augury requites my prayer—but hence with ill-divining thoughts !

Alraschid's wife should scorn their influence—the heavens will guard their own—I bless the prophet, and defy my fate!

CHORUS.

Queen of the east, whose beauty, &c.

(*Cephania ascends the terrace to the seraglio gate, followed by her train—the people prostrate themselves as she passes—the scene closes on the group*)

SCENE II—*inside of Alexis's cabin.*

enter ZOE.

Zoe. Alexis! Alexis! renegade bridegroom of mine! whither wander you? you left me before sun-rise to drive the camel toward the desert, and twelve long, *long* hours have wasted since in solitude. There all the city has been making holyday, to see the sultana, and hear the fine music on the Tigris—yet Zoe must keep house the while! ah! for this fond heart! the court pageant and its minstrelsy, passed unseen—unheard—for Alexis paced the desert, and watchful Zoe, could only listen for his camel's bell!

AIR—ZOE.

From twining arms, ere sun-rise starting,
Alexis sigh'd a fond farewell,
And as we pledged a kiss at parting
He bade me watch the *camel's bell.*
Sweet ding. ding, dong! I heard it play—
Methought its jingle seem'd to say
"With burning noon will come the time
Again to hear my pleasant chime!"
O! cheerful bell!
I loved thee well,
And still to break my lonely song
Thy changes rang with ding, ding, dong!

But noon hath pass'd, twelve hours have fleeted—
Since last Alexis bade adieu!

My watch is vain—my hopes are cheated—
And now I deem the bell untrue.
Its jingle still I strive to hear—
But silence mocks my wishful ear,
Ah ! when shall come the promised time
Once more to hear that pleasant chime ?
Dear, faithless bell !
I prithee tell—
And sweetly close my lonely song
With changes rang of ding, ding, dong !

(*a soft tap is given against the door*)

Zoe. Ah ! there's somebody at the door—tis surely Alexis—how delightful ! (*opens it, and* BENMOUSSAFF *enters*) no ! tis the cadi—how disagreeable ! (*aside*)

Ben. Beautiful Zoe ! my gem of Golconda ! my gold dust of the Ganges ! all the sweet salutations of the afternoon betide you !

Zoe. Your worship is very polite ; but indeed I wish you would not call at our cabin so frequently, when my husband is abroad.

Ben. Wherefore so, my nutmeg in blossom !

Zoe. Because I have neighbors, who sometimes will employ their eyes and ears.

Ben. Ay ! and their tongues afterwards, I suppose ; the scandalous wretches : ah ! Zoe ! this is a wicked world, and full of naughty talkers ; but there's a necessity for my visits : you know, I have private dealings with Alexis.

Zoe. But not with his wife.

Ben. Poh ! poh ! Alexis is a greek christian, who lives by the smuggling of forbidden liquors, and unless I were to stand his friend, he would be ruined : for the sale of wine among true believers, is contrary to the law of the land.

Zoe. And the *toleration* of it, contrary to the oath of your worship's office.

Ben. Hem ! my oath—why that is—hem ! something sticks in my throat. No, Zoe, no—you have formed quite a wrong opinion upon this subject ; I must expound to you : you dont understand law.

Zoe. No ; I simply pretend to common sense.

Ben. Now, I'll illustrate : tis true Alexis sells the wine, but then he sells it *privately ;* mark that, *privately :* and I, as the cadi, in mere consideration of—

Zoe. Just two thirds of the profit upon each flask—

Ben. Pshaw ! never mind the consideration :—as I was saying—Alexis sells the wine privately, and I also privately sell him——

Zoe. Your worship's sanction.

Ben. O, fy ! Zoe ; that's a vastly improper word : a magistrate must never *sanction* a breach of the law : no, I sell him my—*ignorance.*

Zoe. How very rich your worship must be ! sure such a stock in trade can never be exhausted !

Ben. Ah, banterer ! well, now having explained the commercial arrangement between us, you must not chide me for this visit. Husband and wife, you know, are *one ;* and surely Zoe, his partner for life, I may be allowed to regard also as his partner in trade.

Zoe. If you please ; but only as his *sleeping partner.*

Ben. Heigho ! Alexis is a happy man ! Zoe, dont you perceive something peculiar in the expression of these eyes ?

Zoe. Let me look : yes, they twinkle frightfully.

Ben. Ah ! that's a sentimental languor, Zoe ! I have a secret sorrow, you shall be my confidant ; I am distractedly in love with the most beautiful of her sex.

Zoe. True ; your worship has a wife : the lady Grumnildra.

Ben. Dont mention her, I beseech ; that nauseous old woman ! she is more terrible than the monsoons ; excepting that tygress Grimnigra, the wife of Mustapha, the emir, she is the most pestilent shrew in all Bagdat. No, Zoe, the object of *my* passion is a different creature. (*approaching*) She is now not very distant from me——

Zoe. (*retreating*) I wander still further in my doubts.

Ben. I heave ! I throb ! I burn ! I blaze ! oh. Zoe ! behold your adorer at your feet ! (*he casts himself fantastically before her—she surveys him for a moment*

attentively, then bursts into a fit of immoderate laughter)

Ben. Thou pitiless hyæna! dost thou deride my agonies.

Zoe. Ha, ha, ha! stay—dont get up yet, pray let me look at you a little longer—ha, ha, ha! (*Alexis looks in at the casement—Zoe gives a sudden sign and he checks himself*)

Ben. Does this prostration of thy victim gratify thee?

Zoe. O! yes, amazingly; kneel, I charge you, kneel.

Ben. I do, I do; now then murmur the soft confession in my ear—even as the nightingale woos the rose!

Zoe. Hold! if the fortress must capitulate, let me at least secure terms for the garrison! (ALEXIS *softly opens the door behind Benmoussaff, and holds it a jar*)

TRIO—ZOE, BENMOUSSAFF, ALEXIS.

Zoe. Mighty man! if I surrender,
Pledge me first a solemn vow;
Swear! to love with heart as tender
Ever fierce and fond as now.
Ben. I swear! ever! o! ever!
Zoe. Mighty man! though rivals languish,
Swear your love shall never stray—
Ah, fond heart! that doubt is anguish—
Swear! and make it easy, pray!
Ben. I swear! never! o, never!
Zoe. (*allegro*) Rise, and by my smiles rewarded
Live by love supremely blest!
Ben. By those radiant eyes regarded,
Joys too vast invade my breast.
Alex. (*aside*) Soon I'll change those sportive glances
Into looks of graver sort.
Zoe. Come, knit hands, I'll teach you dances;
Swains are brisk who come to court.

Ben. Though unskill'd in such advances
I'll not baulk a lady's sport.
All. Fal lal lal ! and lara, lara !
Fal lal, &c.

(Zoe engages the cadi in a quick dance—Alexis steals forward by her signals and chassees into the figure —Benmoussaff attempts to stop, but they twirl him alternately from one to the other, and force him to continue till he reels with giddiness)

Alex. Ha, ha ! I crave permission to compliment your worship, upon the gracefulness of your motions ; I have seldom seen a dance sustained with so fanciful a spirit.

Ben. Bless me ! I'm quite out of breath ; why, I confess, Alexis, you have found me in rather a whimsical situation ; but I protest nothing immoral was intended :—I was merely persuading Zoe to practise a new step.

Alex. I'm afraid it was a *false* step ; at least, your worship must allow, that from the moment I became a spectator, you mistook your *time.*

Ben He, he ! that's a pleasant jest ; you are a jocular fellow

Alex Vastly jocular ; I'll make bold to give your worship a proof—*(tweaks him by the nose)* that's another pleasant jest !

Ben. Ah, ah ! here's an atrocious assault ; why, sirrah ! have you no respect for authority ?

Alex. Not when it is vested in hands that would abuse it.

Ben. Mighty fine ! is this your gratitude for my generous protection ?

Alex An empty flask for your protection ! I have always bought it of you at double its value. Look ye, old whiskers ! you have lived half a century by extortion and rascality ; your very name is a polecat that infects the common air of Bagdat Rich rogues have sometimes favors to sell, which honest poverty is compelled to purchase ; but the danger, as well as the of-

fence is mutual ; and depend upon it if you threaten, the punishment also shall be equally divided.

Ben. Say you so—(*aside*) this fellow must be taken care of. Well, Alexis, I've a sweet temper, and dont take offence. Have you any more remarks to offer ?

Alex. Only one, it is this ; yonder stands the door—in the opposite corner is deposed a cudgel. Now, destiny sternly decrees, that either your worship's leg should chassee through the one, or the arm of your humble servant flourish the other : do I make myself understood ?

Ben. Perfectly ; the text is so obvious, I won't trouble you for an illustration. But hold ! before I depart let me warn you, in the name of the caliph, not to admit any stranger beneath this roof after sunset.

Alex. You may trust me—I have no partiality for intruders. (*jogging him towards the door*)

Ben. Well, well, dont hurry me : let me pass forth into the street with all the decorus dignity of a magistrate. I am now going to the bezestein, to recite the the caliph's proclamation to the citizens.

Alex. I and my camel shall attend the oration.

Ben. (*aside*) I shall be prepared for your reception. With your camel? how many flasks ? eh ?

Alex. I'll show my accounts in due time ; there's the door.

Ben. Dont hurry me, remember my dignity ; an official person like me——

Alex. Should take a hint—never remain in a place, till the stronger party is forced to turn him out. (*pushes him through the door into the street.*

Zoe. Ha ! ha ! Alexis ! applaud your Zoe for an excellent actress. Did I not cajole the ancient sinner dextrously ?

Alex. No angler e'er managed his bait with a prettier temptation. That iniquity upon crutches ! tis lucky for him I returned so soon, for had he wronged me of a single kiss, I'd have pounded his carcass to a mummy.

Zoe. No : believe me, I guarded my lips with a constancy worthy of our greek ancestors.

Alex. (*kissing her*) Ah! though noon be past, I feel morning's clearest dew yet clinging to these roses! I shall banquet greedily upon their sweets anon. (*going*)

Zoe. But whither now? nay, Alexis, is this well? abroad all day, yet quit me again so suddenly.

Alex. I left my camel in a neighbor's stall. I will but drive him once through the bezestein, just for the chance of a sly customer to an odd flask. Money, Zoe—ah! money must be made while we are young, or I and my camel shall pad the desert in our old age.

Zoe. Well, go thy ways—against thy return, I'll dress up our little board as daintily as loving housewife can provide.

Alex. Ay, wench, then for our supper and a flask of the old vintage.

Zoe. Then for a merry ballad and a tale of other times.

Alex. Till the wasted lamp flickers in its socket.

Zoe. As we sink to rest, memory in murmurs will bless heaven for the day that is past.

Alex. And in our dreams hope and fancy, like good-tempered fairies, will prattle of to-morrow.

DUET—ALEXIS—ZOE.

How boon are the hours after set of the sun,
When nature unzones and all labors are done:
The camel in gladness is led to his stall,
The distaff and spindle are hung by the wall;
The lattices close, and our table is spread,
Poor greeks, it is true, on no dainties are fed,
But light are our spirits, as lightly we sup,
And the name of some relative sweetens each cup.

Proud mussulmen slumber on pillows of state—
Poor greeks sleep on rushes, yet blessing their fate:
The indolent rich seek but find not repose,
While industry's eye lids unconsciously close.
Red morning light strikes unreproved on our eyes,
For though to fresh labors it bids us arise,
Yet boon are the hours after set of the sun,
When nature unzones and all labors are done.

[*exeunt*

SCENE III—*the bezestein, crowded with characters of all descriptions.*

CHORUS.

O! now the bezestein is merry!
With merchandize crying,
With customers buying,
With folk in all stations,
With goods from all nations—
Here business and pleasure,
Make labor—take leisure—
Dispersed yet united,
And all well delighted—
For o! the bezestein is merry!

BENMOUSSAFF, *attended by his officers, comes forward, and collects the populace around him.*

CHANT—BENMOUSSAFF.

Good people of Bagdat! I charge you draw near,
And the law of the caliph with reverence hear!
This eve, after sun-set, no creature must roam,
But each loyal citizen speed to his home.
Your household's be muster'd, your lattices block'd,
And your gates against strangers religiously lock'd:
Whoever the streets in the dark hour shall tread,
For the fault of his *foot* shall atone with his *head*.
Good people, beware! ere the night watches come,
Your signal will strike on the evening drum.

(*people to each other*)

Ah, neighbor, beware! ere the night watches come!
Your signal will strike on the evening drum.

ALEXIS *enters, leading his camel laden with panniers.*

Sand o! sand from the desert!
Who'll buy my sand?

CHORUS.

O! now the bezestein is merry! &c.

(*during the repeat of the chorus, Alexis appears, selling small bags from the right hand pannier—Benmoussaff observes, and taking aside an ancient female, seems to counsel her in dumb show*)

Old W. (*approaching Alexis*) Friend! I would be your customer for a bag of this same sand: truly, the fame of it is mightily noised in Bagdat.

Alex. (*aside*) Now, this must be a jolly old toper, by the devoutness of her aspect. My noble lady, let me serve you.

Old W. Hold, friend! methinks I snuff a delicious odor from the *opposite* pannier—is there a difference in your sand?

Alex. (*aside*) Yes—the fume of the flask has stung her delicate nose already. Hem! the bags in this pannier contain some curious sand of a moister quality.

Old W. I'll deal with you for a sample. Will this sequin purchase me a bag?

Alex. Your ladyship is liberal. (*delivers a large bag, aside to her*) If, when you reach home, any thing extraordinary should be found in the bag——

Old W. Nay, I'll not defer an examination so long—luckily the cadi is at hand to assist me. Neighbors, I pray you, behold the contents of my purchase. (*produces the flask*) Ah! I shall faint—the irreligious wretch has sold me wine!

Alex. (*moves away*) Sand o! who'll by my sand?

Ben. (*rushing forward*) Stop him there! seize upon that knave and his camel!

Alex. Eh! how! seize my camel! master Benmoussaff? what's the meaning of this?

Ben. I shall explain that presently. Search that left-hand pannier!

Alex. Holloa! search my panniers! why, master Benmoussaff——

Ben. Observe! he winks his eyes at me—but I dont understand him.

Officer. (*searching*) The pannier is full, and every bag contains a flask.

Ben. O the impiety of the times! my feelings are quite shocked! thou naughty infidel! I here confiscate thy camel with its burden, and command thee to pay down upon the spot, the lawful fine of fifty sequins, or forthwith be lodged within the prison.

Alex. Oho! I smell the roguery now. Good people —neighbors—friends! listen while I expose this perjured old caitiff, and——

Ben. Stop his mouth! he is going to revile the caliph, and that's high treason.

Alex. No, villain—tis his infamous officer.

Ben. That's petty treason. Stop his mouth, I say!

Officer. (*uncorks a flask*) Marry! by its smell, this should be old wine of the finest flavor.

Ben. *Old* wine! say you? that aggravates the wickedness.

Old W. Good master cadi! I pray you let a pile presently be kindled in the centre of the bezestein, and the accursed liquor, publicly consumed.

Ben. Not publicly—that would give too much importance to the affair—no—carry the liquor to my house, and I'll take care it shall be consumed in *private.*

Alex. Ah! robber! marauder! cut-purse!

Ben. Ah! protect me, good people! if you love justice, and reverence virtue—I give my person into your hands as a sacred deposit.

Alex. (*struggling*) Rage! vengeance! devils!

Ben. Do you hear him? there's impiety! drag the infidel to prison!

MUSICAL COLLOQUY.

Ben. Away to the prison! guards drag him away!
Alex. For a cudgel to pound thee to powder I pray!
Guards. Away!
Alex. Fire and furies!
Ben. Oh! hear how he swears!
All. The law is regardless of threats or of prayers!

ZOE *enters and rushes to her husband.*

Zoe. Ah! whither, Alexis. my life art thou borne!
Alex. From love and from Zoe by baseness I'm torn.
Zoe. Kind neighbors! behold with compassion my wo!
Alex. O! loosen my arms!
B n. I shall catch my death blow!
All. The tumult increases—she pleads and he swears——
But law is regardless of threats or of prayers!

(*the evening drum beats, instantaneously the crowd disperses—Alexis submits to his fate, and Zoe overwhelmed by despair, retires upon the opposite side—as the populace separate they murmur to each other*)

Ah! neighbor, beware lest the night watches come,
Our signal *now* strikes on the evening drum.

SCENE IV—*a street in Bagdat—the evening drum beats without—citizens cross, retiring to their houses—they enter their respective doors—presently after the lattices are closed before the windows, and a general stillness prevails—as the music dies away,* ALMANZOR *enters with a slow and measured step, supporting* ORASMYN.

Alm Onward! nay, onward! sweetest boy!

Oras. I cannot uncle! in sooth I cannot—my limbs faint under me, and all their strength is gone.

Alm. Yet bear up but a little, and we reach our friends.

Oras. Ah, me! where are they, uncle! sure, we have journeyed far to seek them; this is our fifth long day of pilgrimage. Yesternight, you said that we had gained the desert's edge, and there our camels foundered. I slept beneath a palm tree's pleasant shade and my dreams were happy; but you scared them suddenly

and long ere dawn, while yet the east was dark, still "onward!" was your cry. O! we have thrided forests, climbed rocks, and forded floods, through all the burning hours of noon, to reach this vast strange place. Nay, I shall find my grave before my friends if we must travel further.

Alm. Courage, Orasmyn! our journey is accomplished. Thou standest now in Bagdat: even in that great proud city of whose wonders oft-times by the watch-fire's blaze, at nights I have discoursed to thee.

Oras. I little prize such wonders; they please not like the simple home that we have quitted. Oh! at this hour, this sun-set hour, methinks there was a soft and solemn charm that brooded ever o'er our desert dwelling; would that I now might hear the curtains of our tent idly flapping to the breeze; or mark the pelican on homeward wing, bearing the far drawn waters to her thirsty brood! ah! scenes beloved and lost! uncle! my tears start freshly at each dear remembrance.

Alm. Cheer thee, my gentle boy! hence with these sickly musings; the brilliant star of thy nativity directs our course. Enterprize invites, and fortune twines thee with a favoring arm! come lean on this staff, and onward!

Oras. I cannot, uncle! in truth I cannot: nay, let me rest awhile against this bulk; my forehead fevers and my lips grow parched: ah! that I might drink.

Alm. (*aside*) What measure may I best pursue. The burying-ground lies yet far distant: that sacred solitude once gained, we might in safety rest till the appointed hour; but ah! those tender limbs! without refreshment they deny their office. Here stands a caravansary! its gates thus early closed! methinks, fifteen divorcing years have strangely altered Bagdat since I knew it last. I can remember well this street, a crowded thorough-fare; and now, a death-like stillness hangs upon each threshold: the change is well; its present privacy is mated to my wish. I'll strike against the gate and ask admittance. (*Almanzor beats at the gate,*

an interval elapses—he strikes again—a lattice opens above, and a citizen looks forth)

Cit. What daring hand is thine, to strike against my gate at this forbidden hour? speak, what are you?

Alm. Weary way farers, who claim that common hospitality to which your sign inviteth all who travel.

Cit. Begone! begone! ye luckless wanderers! know ye not the caliph's law? tis death to be abroad in Bagdat, now the sun hath set! *(music at distance)* hark! the guard approaches—begone, if ye love safety—I dare not hold a longer parley. *(closes the lattice)*

Alm. *(as paralysed by sudden fears)* Mysterious heavens! are we then betrayed? can the usurper yet suspect——

Oras. *(running to him)* Uncle! the blood forsakes your cheek, and sure you tremble——

Alm. 'Tis for thee, dear boy! for thee!

Oras. Nay, sir! where's my danger?

Alm. Hush! hush! the guards are close—this way! no—no—by all directions they advance at once.

*(music becomes loud and louder—guards enter upon all sides—the strangers endeavor to escape in vain—they are surrounded—*GIAFAR *enters—music ceases)*

Giaf. Who, and what are you, that transgress the law? tis Giafar, Alraschid's vizier, who demands your rank.

Alm. Dread sir! our ignorance, and not our will offends. We are strangers from the arabian desert, who but entered Bagdat by the western gate, even as day forsook this world.

Giaf. Whither tends your journey?

Alm. Far as the distant Tartary. We would visit the great fair at Samarcande.

Giaf. Have ye relatives or friends in Bagdat?

Alm. *(after a short pause)* Alas! poor wandering arabs boast no social ties with polished man; our deserts and our liberty are all our birth right.

Giaf. What youth is he, who trembles and averts his face?

Alm. Poor way-worn child! an orphan, sir, confided to my charge.

Giaf. Let me behold him closer—come hither, boy!

Oras. You will not harm me, sir! indeed, I never injured *you*——

Giaf. Fear not, my innocent! (*Giafar gazes scrutinizingly in Orasmyn's face—Almanzor watches in alarm*) *my doubts are satisfied.* Strangers! ye both are free; at yonder guard-house seek refreshment; rove afterwards through Bagdat as ye list—some open porch will yield a licensed shelter for the night.

Alm. The wanderers benizon, rest with you, sir. (*he catches Orasmyn's hand*) Come, boy! come! (*music of march—Giafar waves his hand—the strangers bow low, and pass—guards follow, Aladin and Nourreddin remain with Giafar*)

Giaf. By allah! they are found. Age, feature, garb, all, *all* conspire in proof! Aladin! hie to the palace and present this ring! Alraschid will divine its import. [*exit Aladin*] Nourreddin! say, after the rack had forced his secret, where didst thou lodge the arab slave?

Nour. Deep in a cell, under the seraglio garden.

Giaf. Blessed be that chance, which cast the traitor in my power, and dragged this dark conspiracy to light. The caliph hath himself adventured, alas too daringly I doubt, to pierce the traitor's haunt and prove decisively Cephania's faith. Two hours hence rejoin me at the tomb of Ali, till then your watch is known · this night is laboring with a wild event and, if we prosper, Alraschid's sacred throne, stands fixed for ever!

[*exeunt separately*

SCENE V—*an ancient burying ground, planted with cypresses, over which are scattered monuments in ruin—the horizon is now entirely dark—it thunders at a distance—*ALMANZOR *leads forward* ORASMYN *from among the tombs.*

Alm. Hail! reverend earth! to each of thine eter-

nal thresholds hail! *(he casts himself upon one of the forward ruins, and points towards another for Orasmyn)* Rest thee, Orasmyn! the wished-for goal is reached, and here our travel ends.

Oras. Here! in this desolate, bewildered place! where at each foot-fall the hollow ground returns an hundred echoes! you told me we should lodge with gentle friends; and none but savage spirits should inhabit here. Sure you do but jest!

Alm. Regard my speech as holiest truth. Rejoice, thou weary one! for *here* is rest.

Oras. No, no; way-worn as I am, I would freshly task these tottering limbs till they sank under me rather than make my pillow in so loathed a den. Dear uncle, let us hence! the night is troublous and portends a storm. Nay, hark ye there! already the thunder rolls at distance! this ground shakes under me, and yon tall cypresses so moan and mutter in the rising gust, that now a chilly sickness creeps about my heart.

Alm. Fear not, Orasmyn! thou art with the *dead*! the passive, peaceful, uninjurious *dead! (he rises, and points with his staff majestically around)*—Boy! these broken monuments and ruined graves, from whose blest touch thy shivering spirit now recoils, are chambers of the brave, and wise, and good! heroes, sages, bards, imperishable men! whose forms have been in elder time, whose deeds are now, and shall be ages hence. Glory's rich heirs! memory's beloved wards! *here,* in a long sweet sleep of blessedness they wait the summons of eternal love! boy! regard yon shadowy pile, that lifts its sculptured sorrows loftier than the rest!

Oras. That, where the marble most is fractured?

Alm. Ay, boy! gaze, reverently gaze! within that mouldering sepulchre, the noblest, best, most honored of this earth reposes. Boy, unconscious boy! there sleeps—*thy father!*

Oras. My father! said you? (*he springs towards the tomb, and falls against its front)* oh, let me kneel before its hallowed bound; thus pour my tears and kisses on these cold damp bars that intercept my passage,

here cling and fix for ever :—a living statue, watchful to protect my parent's dust!

Alm. My child! forbear these transports; nay, I command thee rise!

Oras. Alas! for pity. Say, sir, how fell my father?

Alm. Mournfully, yet with a hero's constant pride. Within his palace walls, beset by multitudes, pierced with innumerous wounds, and still to life's last gasp defending and defying! so fell Almanzor's brother: so Orasmyn's sire!

Oras. Who was the impious cause of such a deed?

Alm. Even the sire of him who now holds sway in Bagdat, and with the father's throne inherits still the father's hate: of him who now detains our lost Cephania in disgraceful bonds, and lives to prove thy deadliest foe and mine.

Oras. His name?

Alm. (*with bitter emphasis*) Haroun Alraschid!

Oras. Haroun Alraschid? nay, I remember well, while yet an infant, when first I raised my little hands in prayer, you then pronounced that name with fearful force and bade me curse it.

Alm. (*kindling into fury*) Ay! that did I, boy! as from thy childhood, so to thy latest age preserve that curse. Come, clinch thy hand with mine, and I will teach thee direr forms of malediction. Tremendous genii! ye who watch by night, attentive though unseen; spirits of air, or fire, or grosser earth—to you aloud I first renew those ancient words of hate.—Cursed be the son of Ali's murderer! cursed be Haroun Alraschid! yea, cursed! cursed!

(*the hurricane suddenly bursts forth—the thunder rolls tremendously, and lightnings glare between the tombs and cypresses—an* ÆTHIOP, *wildly habited, who has apparently lain slumbering upon a fragment of the middle sepulchre, leaps up from his posture to the summit of the ruin, and extends his right arm in adjuration to the clouds—the lightning's flash displays his figure*)

Æth. (*aloud*) Cursed be the name Almanzor curseth! yea, cursed be Haroun Alraschid!

Alm. (*after a pause of trepidation*) What wild fantastic shape art thou, that in this stormy hour and place of graves thus strangely dost encounter both our steps and words?—pronounce, uncertain thing, what may'st thou be?

Æth. (*springing from the ruin*) One of the earth, yet scorning that I tread!—the stars forewarned me of this wished event, and bade me offer homage to my chosen lords. (*he prostrates himself*) Hail to thee, arabian sage! hail, thrice hail, to thee, child of the desert!

Alm. Thy purpose then is friendly?

Æth. Else this swift arm had whirled this gleaming javelin to thy heart.

Oras. Nay, dearest uncle, trust him not!—tis sure some spirit; let us fly!

Alm. Hush thee, boy. (*advancing to the Æthiop with a hesitating confidence*) If thou art rightly friend, answer these words, Medina's hopeful birth!

Æth. (*grasps his hand, and replies with solemnity*) Mecca's fulfilling tomb!

Alm. Enough! at once I clasp thee to my heart, assured!—thou then art he appointed as our guide?

Æth. What other should I seem? come, let the wild adventure of our course begin.

Alm. Have with thee! (*points mysteriously to the sepulchre*) which is the fragment we must first remove?

Æth. The corner marble of the topmost step;—through the dark vast beyond, this horn must then be sounded thrice. Come.

Alm. Soft! a moment: lest his childish spirit falter at such scenes, first let me bind Orasmyn's eyes. Boy, kneel down before me.—Now, lend thy handkerchief.

Oras. Ah me! what mean you, sir?

Alm. Obey! and whatsoe'er betides, still keep thou silent.

(*Almanzor fixes the bandage—the boy clasps his hands together, and remains kneeling in mute prayer—the Æthiop approaches the sepulchre—he removes the marble, stoops and applies his horn to the cavity, it sounds thrice—the tempest rages around with deafening violence—the sepulchre slowly yawns asunder, and discloses a dark and frightful chasm—as the thunder ceases, a chant of subterranean voices is heard to rise*)

SUBTERRANEAN CHORUS.

Welcome! welcome! mortal feet,
Now the quick and dead shall meet—
From the land, and from the waves—
Welcome! all who covet graves!

(*a thin quivering flame now springs up, and flickers about the edge of the chasm—Almanzor and the Æthiop each seize upon a hand of the kneeling boy, and forcibly lead him to the brink of the chasm*)

Oras. (*struggling*) Hold! hold! (*by a sudden effort he tears away the bandage from his eyes*) ah! whither have ye drawn me? what gulf is this?—mercy, mercy! fires gleam, and ghastly figures glide below! ah, save me, save me! (*he clings in agony about Almanzor's robe*)

Alm. (*repulsing him, and stamping his foot imperatively*) Descend!

Æth. (*planting his javelin against his breast*) This instant! or I strike!

Oras. Allah! guard thy servant!

(*the terrified boy, exhausted by his struggles, sinks despairingly at Almanzor's feet—the subterranean chant is renewed, while the storm, with redoubled fury, revisits the scene above—Almanzor with the Æthiop, support the boy between them, and descend the gulf as the curtain falls*)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I—*interior of a vast catacomb, lighted at intervals by funeral lamps—on one side shields and weapons piled together in the shape of a rude altar—on the other side a pillar with an engine at its base appears to sustain a portion of the roof—*ORASMYN *is discovered upon the step of the altar, supported between* ALMANZOR *and the* ÆTHIOP—*conspirators of the race of Ali, encircle him in adoration.*

CHORUS.

Child of the desert! awful rise
As the red moon through vaporish skies!
Child of the desert! glorious beam
As the fresh sun on indian stream.

Oras. Ye unknown dwellers of the secret earth! who bow before me and thus hem me round—say, why this homage? how have I deserved these songs of praise? you look as if you meant me kindly—but sure your postures and your words are mockery.

1st Consp. Hail! eastern star!

2d Consp. Hail! ruler over mighty nations!

3d Consp. (a priest) Hail! our prophet's emblem upon earth!

Oras. Peace, peace! my heart will break, if I am taunted thus!

Alm. Child of my care! let not amazement, like a frost, benumb thy spirit, and suddenly my speech shall change these wonders to a stedfast joy. O'er these, and me, and all, reign prince for ever! for thou art rightfully proud Bagdat's lord!—fifteen years since, in his unguarded hour, the royal Ali lost both throne and life: I saw my brother fall—his palace blaze! my only niece, some few years elder than thy little self, was borne to slavery. Thou, Orasmyn! of all this dear, lamented wreck, thou only wert preserved. I bore thee

closely nestled twixt my shield and breast, through all opposing dangers of the night; and reached by miracle a sheltering bourne. Safe to the desert's burning depth I fled, and far from man, man's future ruler reared, yea! reared him worthily for empire and revenge!

CHORUS.

Hail! son of Ali! hail! thrice hail!

Alm. Behold, in this confederated band, thy natural friends, the relics of thy race. Here, while the cheated foe believed thee dead, in this prodigious charnel stored with arms, from year to year, these patriots have convened, commemorating still thy birth with hymns, and sagely scheming to redeem thy rights. The time appointed by thy natal star, for glorious enterprize, now crowns their watch! greet them, Orasmyn! with endearing words; such as may suit a sovereign's lips, their love, their constancy, and this auspicious hour!

Oras. Amazed with doubts, made giddy while I trust, I wish to thank them, yet despair of means. Kind men! you loved my father, fought round him when he fell; I find no words to pay your service, but feel that I could die to satisfy such friends! speak for me, sir! declare my duties, say, what must I do?

Alm. Avenge thy murdered sire—thy suffering race!

Oras. How? how?

Alm. (*solemnly lifting a dagger deposited on the altar*) Grasp this tremendous poniard! round whose blade thy father's life-drops cling in crimson rust, swear! ne'er to rest till thou hast sheathed this steel deep in the heart of his destroyer's son; till Bagdat dreadfully atone her crime; till massacre and havoc choke her streets; her turrets fall; her palaces consume; and vengeance stalk sole monarch o'er the scene!

Oras. O! horror! horror!

Æth. (*vehemently grasping his hand*) Ay! blood! a sea of blood! then fires as red, to sport and sparkle on its boiling waves. Hail! beauteous carnage! hail!

thrice lovely flames ! prononce the glorious covenant ! swear, prince, swear !

Oras. Away ! must I win sceptres with a murderer's hand ? climb to a throne o'er mangled carcasses, and hear my reign proclaimed by howling matrons and the orphan's cry ? never ! for others keep your fatal greatness and the pomp that damns. Leave me to deserts and my first obscurity ; but with me leave my careless innocence and unreproaching heart !

Alm. Eternal allah ! live I to this shame ? is this an Ali ? this my brother's son ? thou soft, degenerate : yet hold my rage ! boy ! if one natural drop yet warm thy veins, one pulse beat faithful to its god-like spring, as thou would'st shun my hate, my mortal curse, be sudden to convince me of thy birth, lest I write strumpet on thy mother's grave ; rend with these ancient hands that fraudful form, and strew thy limbs in madness round these vaults !

Oras. Merciful heavens ! to what am I devoted !

Alm. To fame and glory, or a coward's grave ! provoke me longer, and this arm ! but no, thou wilt not break the old fond heart that loves thee.

Oras. Ah ! weeping ! tears in such reverend eyes ! nay, then indeed I'm lost ! (*he takes the poniard with trembling hand*) come ! dreadful record ! ah ! said you my father's blood ?

Alm. Swear to avenge it ! swear it ! swear it !

Æth. By heaven and hell ! attesting angels and avenging dæmons swear !

Oras. I swear ! ghost of my father ! hear thy wretched son, and—ah ! I grow dizzy—clouds—dark—dark ! (*he drops insensible upon the earth*)

Alm. Orasmyn ! speak ! look up, I charge thee : nay, he is cold !—my boy ! my boy !

3d Consp. He swoons ! the harrassed mind and body could sustain no more ; nay, gently bear him to the cell within, there kindly cordials shall renew the life.

Æth. The prince hath sworn ! remember ye ! tis sworn !

(some bear Orasmyn in, while the priest re-deposits the poniard on the altar, and scatters incense from a censer)

CHORUS.

Rest! ghost of Ali! rest in peace!

Alm. Now my confederates! to our great resolve!
When bursts the lightning! who directs the flash?
How falls the tyrant? speak! our course? our means!
3d Consp. The temper of the people now is apt—
Since first the trusty slave announced thy coming;
Our friends with prophecy and omens strange,
Have hourly practised on the vulgar mind——
Amidst the mosques, nay, in Alraschid's court,
Our vast conspiracy hath secret springs.
This morn, Abudah of the palace guard,
Publish'd our summons on the centry's walk.
Meantime, by tapestry near the shrine conceal'd,
I scared the kneeling priests with words like heaven's!
Doubts, fears, and scruples shake the general heart:
Now sudden deeds were best. To-morrow's eve—
Æth. To morrow! why delay the glorious blow?
This night, this very hour, assail the palace,
Devote Alraschid midst his slumbering guards,
And yield all Bagdat to avenging fires!
Priest. *(aside to Almanzor)* I like this noble passion in your friend,
His flashing eyes declare no common soul,
What is his name? his rank?
Alm. Why question *me?*
Who till this hour ne'er gazed upon his form.
Priest. Has he not been the comrade of your road?
Alm. But now, among the tombs, we first encounter'd,
He was appointed to conduct us hither.
Priest. No; Caled, your arabian slave, who bore
This morn your letter to Cephania,
He was directed from the sun set hour
To watch above, and guide you down these shades.

Alm. Is not this Æthiop known among our band?
Abudah! Hassan!
(*the conspirators gather round Almanzor, who appears to question them—their eyes are then directed towards the Æthiop with disquiet—he watches their gestures and suddenly obtrudes upon their circle*)
Æth. By your leave, grave friends!
Admit me one in this divan of whisperers;
Come! I've a quick sure eye to read mens' hearts;
I am your topic, what would you inquire?
I'st who and what I am?—I answer thus,
I *was* a stranger; *now* I know you all.
My skin is of night's own color; for my heart—
Tis sure a bold one, since I've ventured here:
Perchance an honest one, that's as you use me!
Alm. Audacious ruffian! darest thou to betray?
Æth. Forbear, thou snow-crown'd Ætna cramm'd with fires!
Forbear! thou rash old man; first hear, then chide;
Alraschid is thy foe, so is he mine:
Deep, deadly, lasting as my life, the hate
I bear him. Ali's blood I may not boast,
Yet Ali's quarrel would I serve; stretch forth
Your arms, if ye are wise, and clasp a friend!
Alm. By what close treason did'st thou first acquire
A knowledge of our plans and guidance hither?
Æth. A super human power inform'd my soul.
Man is my master, yet I govern spirits!
Tis written in fate's book, an Ali's hand
Alone must smite the tyrant; else years past
This hand had dealt the blow. Oh! I have wasted
Whole nights o'er caldrons, communing with fiends,
To shape fit horrors for this destined hour.
Behold this wand of ebony! tis carved
With spells: myself, and all I touch, its power
Can render viewless. Save to such clear'd eyes
As Mahomet blesses! bind me to your cause,
And presently I'll lead you to your prey,
All like thin air, through hosts of watchful guards
Invisible and safe! how say you, sirs?

Alm. I will not scorn thee, till I've proved thee false:
Thou say'st, that wand can render thee at will
Unseen though present. *Now*, perform the feat!
Æth. (*after a pause*) Thou did'st mistake my speech; tis true I said,
And true I'll vouch that say, my art can cast
Illusion o'er all eyes the prophet loves not:
But Ali's children are his dearest care—
I may not practise on the blest with spells.
Alm. Nor shalt thou with thy words, detected cheat!
Mark! how a plain truth dashes these liars!
If thou rulest spirits, bid them save thee now!
(*Almanzor draws his poniard—the other conspirators follow his example—the Æthiop retreats against the altar, and brandishing his javelin keeps them at bay*)
Æth. Hold! frantic and ungrateful that ye are!
Nay, if I needs must die, come on! I'll send
Some twenty ghosts before me on my road!
Voice from above. Ho! there!
Alm. Who call'd?
Priest. Tis Almoran, our watch.

ALMORAN *appears upon the roof.*

Alm. Danger's abroad! strange steps and countless torches
Move o'er our heads! tis sure the caliph's guard!
Priest. (*to Almanzor*) Dismiss all fear;—here we might mock whole armies;
Yon pillar holds immoveable and close
The ponderous stone before the sepulchre—
Till that's removed all human search were vain,
This engine at its base, alone can sink it.
Æth. O! for an arm like fabled Hercules!
(*he darts with lightning speed across, seizes upon the engine, and while the conspirators stand astounded at his action, he turns the wheel—the pillar instantaneously sinks—the stone rolls away from the*

mouth of the sepulchre, and the entrance from the burial ground becomes visible)

Æth. (*triumphantly*) Despair, bold spirits! where's your safety now?
The storm is up! the whelming waves drive on;
Now trust me frankly, or partake my ruin!
Nay, nay, no idle ravings! hold this lance;
If I prove false, strike to my heart; till then
Obey this wand!—we live or fall together!

(*he waves his arm commandingly—the conspirators with involuntary obedience range in a line beyond the altar—the Æthiop stands in front, projecting the wand towards the middle of the stage—Almanzor points the javelin to his heart*—NOURREDDIN *with a torch, appears at the mouth of the sepulchre*)

RECITATIVE *accompanied.*

Nour. Who stirs below? who thrids the gloom?

ECHO *answers.*

Is't echo that replies?
Or doth an answer rise
From startled sleepers of the tomb?

GIAFAR *and guards with torches appear.*

Giaf. All hush'd!—Nourreddin! lift thy torch and lead
Before me to the search—the rest remain!

(*Nourreddin and Giafar descend the narrow winding steps, and enter—they pause in the centre*)

Nay, not a form or sound! the dead alone
Seem dwellers round us—flash the torch beyond!

(*Nourreddin strikes the light full upon the figures of the conspirators—Giafar's eye wanders slowly over the space they occupy, unconscious of their presence*)

Still all is solitude! dim funeral lamps
But gleam on silent men whose flames are out
For ever! doubtless the late hurricane,
Whose lightnings strew the ground above with ruins,
Hath split the marble threshold of this tomb.

Peace to its slumbering trust! break we not longer
Mortality's dear sabbath; pass and return!

(*Giafar and Nourreddin re-ascend—they disappear with the guards from the opening—the sound of their retreating steps rapidly dies away in distance—the Æthiop retains his attitude unmoved—Almanzor drops the lifted javelin, and bends his eyes abashed upon the ground—all the other conspirators sink involuntarily on their knees in awful homage—the Æthiop slowly relaxes from his abstraction, and haughtily surveys the group before he speaks*)

Æth. How! are the proud knees humbled! cry you mercy!
This to a liar, a detected cheat!
(*to Almanzor*) Droops *your* crest also, wrathful sir? I thought
That arm ere now, like his that rolls the thunder,
Had dealt out fate; why falls the threatening lance?
And wherefore hesitates arabian justice?

Alm. What fellow man did ne'er achieve, is now
Thy boast; thou hast subdued Almanzor; seek
No prouder triumph. Whether heaven or hell
Be parent to thy art, I will not ask;
Be ours at once, and name thine own reward.

Æth. Now you speak nobly, and our hands may meet!
Let thrones and treasures pay another's claim,
The kiss of beauty be the Æthiop's boon!
One word shall shape my vast reward—*Cephania!*

Alm. How said'st thou?

Æth. Ay! thy niece. The caliph's bride!
Now then the marvel's out: at once you spy
The jealous hate that weds me to your cause.
Alraschid's queen reigns lady of this soul.
Long years in secret have I sigh'd her slave.
Stern force hath bound the captive fair to one
She doubtless loathes, the curse of all her race.
Swear, when her thraldom ends, to yield her mine,
And boundless empire shall requite the gift!

Alm. By Ali's ghost, I swear!—Cephania's thine!

Speak, friends, what voices join with mine?
Con. All, all!
Æth. Enough! possess me presently with all your plan—
A written list of every secret friend—
And general knowledge of your means—thus once
Inform'd, I'll lead you to insured success.
Bring forth the prince; to counsel, then to arms!
Alm. For great revenge!
Æth For *love*, far greater!
Alm. Orasmyn's throne!
Æth. Cephania's bridal kiss!

CHORUS.

Solo. Where are the scimetar's famous in story,
That flash'd through the war-storm like meteors of glory?
Solo. They rest and they rust on our forefather's graves.
Semi-Cho. Shall the sons of the mighty live dastards and slaves?
Full Cho. No!—by angel and fiend!—no—by earth, air, and fire!
The son of an Ali is true to his sire!

(*they impetuously break the altar, and each conspirator snatches up his arms, as it divides into pieces*)

Each the steel and each the shield
That his sire was wont to wield—
Who shall conquer him who fights
For his father's ravish'd rights?
Tyrants! of the fray beware!
Freedom and revenge are there!

(*Almanzor and the Æthiop bring forward Orasmyn, and place again the poniard in his hand—the conspirators compose a pyramid with their shields, upon which they elevate his figure, and the scene closes upon the group*)

SCENE II—*a hall in the house of Mustapha the emir.*

enter MUSTAPHA, *pursued by* GRIMNIGRA.

Grim. Wretch! traitor! libertine!

Must. Bleat not so troublously, my tender lamb!—gentlest Grimnigra, I prithee be pacified.

Grim. Pacified, quotha! I'll scream the knowledge of my wrongs round all Bagdat first;—false, sensual traitor! have I not detected thee in the very fact of immorally soliciting one of my handmaids? thou base-spirited renegade! how could'st thou stoop from the dignified embraces of a Grimnigra, to court the vulgar caresses of her slave?

Must. Angel of purity! credit thy faithful spouse, when he declares——

Grim. Traitor! peace;—thus I am rewarded for my condescension, when by an alliance with this hand I elevated thee from plebeian insignificance to the proud distinctions of an emir!—ah! wherefore did the great grand daughter of a sultan, the widow of a bashaw, and the first cousin of the mufti, so fatally forget the glories of her rank?—but tremble, caitiff, the same hand that hath exalted can in turn depress;—the mufti may redress my wrongs, and a single complaint to my cousin in the morning, secures to my husband a present of the bow-string in the afternoon.

Must (*aside*) That argument always chokes me.

Grim. O! my dear deceased husband! these are pious tears to thy memory! thou wert a virtuous man; why I am destined to bewail thy early loss?

Must. Early! why, the good man was ninety-six when he died, and without vanity I think that his successor——

Grim. Offer not the odious comparison, plebeian that thou art, wasn't my husband a bashaw with three tails?

Must. He was a magnificent man, I confess; but in point of affection, oh! Grimnigra! will no caresses soften? (*kisses her hand*)

Grim. O! susceptibility! thou bane of woman!

well ; this once I extend my gracious pardon, but if ever again——

enter a SLAVE.

Slave. A young female requests admission to your lordship in private.

Grim. Ah ! an assignation made under my very roof !

Slave. I think tis on some matters of the magistracy ; she talks of ill-usage from the cadi Benmoussaff.

Grim. Oh ! in that case indeed ! you have my consent to admit her.

Must. Thanks to my angel for her complaisance—you know this Benmoussaff is an enemy of mine.

Grim. He treats his amiable wife, my friend Grumnildra, with flagrant neglect, therefore I abhor him. (*aside to slave*) Hark'ye ! is this female handsome ?

Slave. (*aside*) Too much so for a private interview. [*exit*

Grim. Hem ! well, my Mustapha ! I shall now leave you awhile to the duties of your office.

Must. One chaste embrace to seal my pardon !

Grim. Deluder ! I am all thine own ! but never forget, my beloved Mustapha ! no, even in the midst of our tenderest endearments, I charge you never forget that your affectionate wife can order you to be strangled whenever she pleases ! [*exit*

Must. What a tigress ! but she's old, tremendously old ; the dear deceased bashaw must soon have her again snug by his side, and then—eh ! by Mahomet's whiskers ! a most delicate creature !

enter ZÓE, *who kneels to him.*

Zoe. Gracious emir !

Must. Rise, my fair suppliant and impart thy grievance.

Zoe. Oh ! my lord ! I come for justice on the wicked cadi, Benmoussaff ; I am told your lordship's power is absolute in this quarter of the city.

Must. It is. Go on; you are a vastly well informed young woman.

Zoe. This wicked cadi, my lord, has cast my husband into prison upon a false pretence, purely out of revenge, because I had repulsed his odious attempts upon my honor.

Must. Oh! the reprobate! so you have sought my protection against his naughty schemes?

Zoe. Yes, my lord, and I humbly would solicit——

Must. Rather say command; those eyes, fair creature! have a power to—so you say this terrible cadi wanted——

Zoe. Yes, my lord, he *wanted*—but thank heaven! my virtue——

Must. Ay, virtue's a fine thing, a very fine thing, to be talked of. But you acted wisely, child! a cadi to presume: had he been an emir indeed——

Zoe. My lord!

Must. Hark'ye, child!—your husband, you say, is in prison; profit by the present opportunity, and your fortune may be made for life.

Zoe. I dont comprehend you, my lord.

Must. In a word, bestow upon the emir those favors you have denied the cadi; and this weighty purse of sequins—(*forces a purse into Zoe's hand, which she indignantly dashes upon the ground*)

Zoe. Is trampled upon in scorn, as the representative of a villain!

Must. Here's a virago! is the girl a lunatic? dont I offer you gold, and that can purchase——

Zoe. Every thing, but the peace of mind you would tempt me to sell for it. Shame! shame! reflect, my lord, was any daring libertine to assail the honor of your own wife——

GRIMNIGRA *silently opens the door of the inner room, and steals forward.*

Must. Would to heaven such a man could be found—I'd buy up all the horses in Arabia for his use, that he might carry off the old nuisance as far as the red sea!

Grim. (*stepping forward*) Say you so, traitor ?—your real sentiments are divulged at last.

Must. Oh ! Mahomet ! I feel the bow-string about my throat already. (*aside*)

Grim. I suspected some licentious project, and quietly stole into the next apartment on purpose that I might confound the whole iniquity.—(*to Zoe*) Young woman ! I applaud your correct principles : you repulsed the tempter with becoming dignity :—and as you are in distress, I am inclined, as a token of my esteem, to present you with——

Zoe. Oh, thanks ! dear beneficent lady !

Grim. But no—on reflection, the gift of money would derogate from the merit of a good action, and virtue is its own reward So, go thy ways, child, and instead of my purse I shall give you my prayers.

Zoe. Oh ! world ! world !—are justice and compassion banished from all bosoms ?—seek them, Zoe, in their last shelter, the prison of thy husband ! [*exit Zoe*

Must (*aside*) Now comes my sentence—I am in a lily dew with apprehension !

Grim. Ho ! there—slaves ! instantly fetch hither my first cousin the mufti and——

Must. O ! that terrible kinsman ! thou injured excellence ! by all our past tenderness——

Grim. Hold ! on second thoughts, prepare my palanquin—I shall go forth myself—[*exeunt slaves*]—(*aside*) Coolness upon this occasion will be more dignified than rage.—Mustapha ! go thou strait into the little dark chamber under the moat—seat thyself upon the high three-legged stool in its furthest corner, and there await in thoughtful silence my return !—go !

Must. (*sighing dolefully*) Oh ! [*exit Mustapha*

Grim. Yes ; I'll now visit my amiable friend, Grumnildra, and consult with her upon this afflicting subject. As our wrongs are mutual, so may be our vengeance O ! these husbands ! these husbands !—ah ! the world will never be well managed, till women make the laws and men have only to obey them.

[*exit*

SCENE III—*a room in the prison.*

ALEXIS *discovered.*

Alex. Of all the undone varlets in Bagdat, Alexis the greek, surely thou art the most disconsolate!—in one fatal day I have lost my liberty, my camel, and my wife. Shall I ever recover either of the three? alas! no: liberty is like one of my wine flasks, pick but the tiniest crevice through its side and drop by drop all the precious spirit oozes away. The law has lain hold of my camel, and that's a hand never known to relax its grasp while a substance remains to be squeezed; then for my wife! not one visit, not one message. Heigho! all the world seems to have forgotten me, except my gaoler when he unlocks the creaking door of my cell with one hand, and presents with the other, a slice of mouldy bread sopped in a pitcher of brackish water. In a month's time I shall be dieted into the delicate slenderness of an eel, and Zoe will hardly know me for the plump, sleek, well-fed camel driver whom she once regarded. But why do I think of her who has ceased to think of me? heigho! ah, the outer grating unlocks——

Zoe. (*without*) Lead me to his cell directly!

Alex. Ha! Zoe's voice!—she's true, she's true!—Zoe remembers her husband, and Alexis is no longer unhappy!

enter ZOE, *who flies to him.*

Zoe. My husband! my dearest husband! I am come to share your dwelling; have you room for me?

Alex. In my heart, Zoe! ever. The pain it has suffered in your absence, teaches it how to value your return.

Zoe. Trust me, mine has not grieved me less bitterly in the interval; but my delay has not been a neglectful one. I knew, Alexis, that without money in a prison, you must lack many little comforts; so, I bethought me, to sell the few trinkets my parents left

me and supply you from the produce. I had believed the trifles valuable, because they were remembrances from those I loved, but alas ! my hard purchasers rated them by a different estimate, so the sum is very scanty ;—but such as it is, Alexis, despise it not for Zoe's sake.

Alex. (grasping her hand with emotion) Zoe, kind, generous Zoe !

Zoe. Nay, now I look about me, I protest a prison seems no such ill dwelling ; only to be sure it bears an ugly name. Courage, dear Alexis ! custom will soon reconcile us to the change. Our acquaintance cannot visit us, but we will make a universe of each other ;—we will talk, sing, and dance together : and trust me, even in bondage, we'll live cheerily.

Alex. (struggling with his tears) That will we, girl ! live cheerily ? ay ! we'll be happy ; quite happy. Oh ! thumb-screws and bow strings for that damnable cadi ! is there no redress ? can't I petition his superior magistrate, the emir ?

Zoe. Poor fellow ! I dare not tell him all, twould make him desperate. *(aside)* No, no, we have nothing to hope from the *justice* of our oppressors.

Alex. Shall rascality then deride its victims ?—o ! I shall run mad !

Zoe. Alexis ! do I possess your confidence ? I mean your implicit, your unlimited confidence ?

Alex. I were a pagan else !

Zoe. Hear me. I have devised a scheme, but dare not execute it, without your voluntary sanction. Say, will my husband authorise his wife to become an adventuress ?

Alex. If the request had been an impropriety, Zoe could not have preferred it. I place my honor freely in your hands.

Zoe. Thanks, thanks ! the sacred trust shall be returned to its owner unsullied from my use. Your words have inspired me with a new life, and now I fly to my adventure.

Alex. Well—but—hey—how ! am I not to be told.

Zoe. Not one syllable. Without a little mystery, a woman would lack the spur to enterprise. Only remember this; by to morrow's dawn either Alexis quits this prison to live with Zoe, or Zoe returns to bondage and dies with her Alexis ! [*exit Zoe*

Alex Farewell ! oh, what a blessing is a good wife, and one that never talks but to the purpose. Ah! how different is my Zoe to cousin Michael's wife. She deafened the miller, banged the brazier, and buried the undertaker.

SONG.

Bagdat is the place for fun,
Wo, ho, my camels;
Four long streets there meet in one,
Man has his tramels;
In corner one, poor Hassan fagg'd,
In corner two a miller lagg'd;
Whose noisy mill, was never still,
Its whirling cogs, like barking dogs,
Went clack, clack, clack;
Till the poor elf, beside himself,
Cried in a pet, o! Mahomet,
Confound all corner houses,
Confound all corner houses.

At corner three, alas! alas!
Wo, ho, my camels,
Dwelt a brazier banging brass,
Man has his tramels;
An undertaker at his door,
Thump'd coffin plates at corner four,
Till left and right, from morn till night,
Before, behind, with every wind,
Clack, clack, bang, bang, rat, tat, tat;
And the poor elf, beside himself,
Cried in a pet, o! Mahomet,
Confound all corner houses,
Confound all corner houses.

Hassan weary of his life,
 Wo, ho, my camels,
Took unto himself a wife,
 Man has his tramels;
The miller and the brazier stop,
The undertaker shuts up shop,
But when his mate, begins to prate,
She sets the train, to work again,
 With her clack, bang, rat, tat, tat:
Till the poor elf, beside himself,
Cried in a pet, o! Mahomet,
 Confound all talking spouses!
 Confound all talking spouses!

SCENE IV—*a street in Bagdat.*

enter BENMOUSSAFF *and one of his officers.*

Ben Get you to the prison, and bid the gaoler watch that knave narrowly: keep him on bread and water, that's a very pretty refreshment for a malefactor. And hark'ye! observe particularly that he be kept apart from the other prisoners, for his conversation is dangerous. He might asperse my sacred reputation, and if such rabble once begin with my character——

Officer. Ay, then indeed, your worship, there's no guessing when they would stop. [*exit officer*

Ben. I think I have managed this affair like a refined politician I have tempted my underling to be dishonest, and pocketed the fruits of his peculation myself; then in due time, the paltry agent is consigned to punishment, while the dignified principal escapes suspicion.

enter ZOE, *behind.*

Zoe. Kind lady fortune! my game is sprung already. Cadi! are you not a barbarous man?

Ben. Oho! my fair mistress disdain, are you with me? you come to importune, but I am marble, perfect adamant. So go thy ways.

Zoe. This to Zoe? this to her who but yester-evening you swore was sovereign of your heart.

Ben. Cockatrice! my love is turned to hate.

Zoe. Indeed! well—well! perfidious as thou art; my too easy yielding meets a just rebuke.

Ben. Eh! how? yielding! didst thou say? why, Zoe——

Zoe. No, no, I thank you for this indifference, it restores me to my duty.

Ben. (*aside*) Tis so. I thought my person would secure the day. Ravishing hesitation! does my Zoe then at last relent?

Zoe. Tis of no consequence; your love is turned to hate.

Ben. Adorable creature! my passion is intense as ever. Now I perceive it all;—that cursed blustering husband made you fearful to reveal your sentiments—but. Mahomet be praised! he is kept securely. Say, when may I visit you, shall it be this evening?

Zoe. Saint Athanasius defend me! I admit a male visitor in the evening, alone by myself and unprotected!—this evening, indeed! no, no, not a creature will I suffer to cross my threshold—at least not before midnight.

Ben. The very hour for tenderness! at midnight be it. No impertinent neighbors will then be peeping from their lattices; and old Grumnildra will be snoring. I shall be punctual.

Zoe. No, no, dont come. I have not wherewithal to entertain guests, and my poverty leaves no room for love.

Ben. The Indies are upon your ankles, the Persian Gulf is about your neck, the coast of Barbary, binds your wrists, and the islands of the Archipelago dangle from your ears!—nations shall be ransacked of their treasures to adorn my love. Here's a purse with fifty pieces, to provide some trifling banquet for to-night! say, my mountain snow-flake, dost thou melt at last?

Zoe. Ay! even as my countrywoman Danae did to Jupiter of old. (*clinks the purse*) A golden shower is

the readiest dissolvent in nature !—but soft ! I see my husband's young kinsman, Constantine, at the corner of the street ; dont let him notice us together. Away !

Ben. I fly !—but oh ! the lingering hours ! my love, adieu ! remember twelve, and think of thy Benmoussaff ! [*exit Benmoussaff*

enter CONSTANTINE.

Const. So, cousin ! I perceive you have opened the campaign in earnest.

Zoe. Ay, Constantine ! " and if my young lieutenant has but prospered equally with his general in the onset, the foe shall be routed horse and foot." Say, dear coz, hast entangled Mustapha ?

Const. Nay, trust me, I am not so young but I can execute a lady's commands with adroitness ;—though, faith, I had a plaguy trouble to manage the affair. Old Grimnigra had but just forgiven her caitiff, and they were cooing together like a brace of turtles after a thunder storm ; so I was forced to feign business of state, before I could speak to him in private.

Zoe. Well, coz, what said he to my message ?

Const. Oh ! I can't remember half ;—but here—you may read what he has written. (*gives a billet*)

Zoe. (*reads*) " Composed of spices, and distillation of all fragrant gums ! thy obsequious vassal sendeth greeting ! thy kinsman's words have dispersed all doubt ; thou didst suspect my termagant wife in her hiding-place, and therefore in prudence didst affect aversion from my suit. I will visit thee after midnight—even as thou hast appointed—till when, forget not thy adoring Mustapha." Excellent !

Const. So say I, for this purse accompanies the note, that a proper feast may be prepared for his reception.

Zoe. Oh, the munificence of these withered gallants ! but I am already supplied for the night's entertainment —so carry Mustapha's present to my husband's gaoler, discharge the penalty for which he is confined, and leave directions that he be liberated by to-morrow's

dawn; but remember, he must not know of his release *before* to-morrow.

Const. Ah! now you task me with a gladsome service.

Zoe. I shall find you more errands anon—therefore I charge you despatch this commission quickly.

Const. Think you I could loiter upon such an embassy; the herald of liberty, like the courier of love, should post it upon wings as light and frolic as the news he bears! [*exit Zoe*] ah, me! dark-eyed Oneiza expects me this evening. Well, twill be my first trespass, and when I name its cause, the generous girl will absolve her rover.

AIR—CONSTANTINE.

My dark-eyed maid! by moonlight hour
Thou'lt seek alone our wonted bower;
Thy hand of snow will strew the ground
With balmy leaves and blossoms round,
And oft two lips of flame will sigh,
"Forgetful lover! art thou nigh?"
Then, as the night breeze stirs a bough—
"I hear his step—he hastens now!"
Alas! for hopes by fate betrayed,
No lover seeks his dark eyed maid!

My dark-eyed maid! then wilt thou weep,
And sigh and sob thy heart to sleep—
Should fancy tempt thee with a dream,
She but renews thy waking theme;
And thou wilt murmur words of bliss,
And pout thy lips to print a kiss—
And stretch thy circling arms in air,
And seem to clasp thy lover there!
Alas! for dreams by fate betrayed,
No lover clasps his dark-eyed maid! [*exit*

SCENE V—*the gardens of the seraglio.*

the ÆTHIOP *enters, waving his ebony wand, followed by* ALMANZOR *and* ORASMYN

Alm. Wondrous man! with fresh amaze at each

new pace I follow thee, through close-drawn barriers and the watch of guards, that wand, unchallenged still directs a way. Where stand we now ?

Æth. Even in the gardens of Alraschid's palace ;—here, at the sultry hour, it ever is Cephania's custom, 'midst these spicy shades, where palms and cedars half exclude the day, and fountains bubble in sequestered freshness, to muse alone and commune with her god.

Oras. Ah ! may I then behold my sister ?

Æth. Hither have I led thee to that special joy ;—days, months, nay, years, still shrouded by my spells, here have I paced, and gazed, and wished ; ne'er daring by a sigh to hint my presence. *Thou*, unreproved, shall clasp her angel form, twine 'midst her arms and grow into her heart !—happy Orasmyn ! ha ! my love appears !—lo ! ye—glorious as fresh day through severing shades, she breaks from yon close cypress walk.

Alm. By allah !—her royal father's port—o ! memory !——

CEPHANIA *is seen traversing the distance of the scene.*

Æth. Soft ye awhile ; Orasmyn first, *alone*. addresses her : the brother's and the sister's earliest words should meet no witness, save great nature's ear.—Young prince ! this bower will veil thee till a fitting moment. (*places him in one of the forward scenes*) She comes—this way a while.

(*he withdraws Almanzor down an opposite walk—at the same moment Cephania appears upon a bridge over a piece of artificial water which divides the garden*)

Ceph. (*from the bridge*) Immyne, command my train they wait at distance. (*plaintive music till she reaches the front*) At length I am alone—a moment now is mine for thought, for meditation, for despair ! yes, yes, *despair !* no single ray of hope is left to cheer my destiny ! o, ye dear combatants ! whichever of you lives the victor, Cephania's eyes must weep against some grave she rather would have made her own.—Come, inexorable doom of all my joys ! dear, yet de-

tested cypher ! come, and once more teach me all my wretchedness ! (*she reads the paper given to her by the arab*) " beloved niece, the bonds of thy captivity shall soon be broken. That brother, whom in infancy report had slain. yet truly lives to claim his birthright and avenge his race ; this night Orasmyn enters Bagdat : the slave who tenders this can fully name our plans and teach thee how to aid their arm. Learn this in brief ! the tyrant husband who hath forced thy vows is doomed a certain victim of thy kinsmen's swords.— Thine, most tenderly, Almanzor." O what a wayward spite is here ! mad contradiction of our stars ! at once my boon and bane are prophecied. Thou dear brother ! for thee an ancient throne is reared ;—thou dearer husband ! an untimely grave is dug for thee !— my poor distracted heart is torn between you !—perchance, while yet I ponder, some dreadful act is shaping ; nay, fix thee, my wavering spirit ! make thy decision quickly ; which shall I save, which sacrifice ?— how, if I betray the plot and so preserve Alraschid ?— ah ! what fiend so damned shall lend me eyes to watch a brother's and an uncle's agony, broken and quivering upon fiery wheels and howling curses with their dying breath ?—the thought is horror ! nay, then, to join their cause and so—allah ! live I to dream it ?— murder my husband ? no, no—that way madness lies ! (*she suddenly kneels with fervor*) o thou, who art in paradise ! my father once, my guardian spirit still— *thee* I adjure ! (*takes a miniature from her bosom*) behold thy wretched daughter, now gazing on the treasured copy of thy living looks. Father, father ! endow this senseless ivory with some quick charm ;— bid these fixed eyes express my duty, breathe through these silent lips thine awful will. Father ! save thy child ! (*Orasmyn, with a stealing step, advances from the bower, and tremulously kneels at Cephania's side —her eye suddenly perceives his figure, and she gazes fearfully*) guard me, allah ! what lovely apparition's this ?—eyes, see you truly ? or is't illusion all ? (*Orasmyn silently raises her hand to his lips, and bursts*

into tears upon it) nay, the touch is warm and human —and now, quick natural tears are gushing on my hand. Speak, gentle youth, who art thou ? (*the boy, unable to articulate, points to the miniature in her hand*) ha ! (*she looks alternately from the picture to the boy*) dear sacred eyes !—nay, ye beam reflected *here !*—my father's sweet yet serious smile !—tis truly copied by a living lip. Can it be ?—no, no—and yet —*Orasmyn ?*

Oras. Sister ! sister ! (*the boy extends his arms—Cephania shrieks and drops into his embrace*)

Ceph. Ha ! I have thee at my heart, thou last dear relic of my royal house ! nay, let me gaze for ever on those looks ; trace the dead father in the living son —call round me phantoms of departed years, and lose my miseries in a golden dream !

Oras. And has my sister thought of her Orasmyn ? have those sweet eyes bewept my fancied loss ?—and do they glitter now to view me safe ?

Ceph. (*starting*) Safe ! safe !—nay, *art* thou safe ? doth Ali's son seek safety here ? o my gay trance dissolves ;—thou dearest, richest treasure of my soul ! what fatal planet hath betrayed thy steps, and lured thee here to bondage or to death ?

Oras. Believe me, I am safe ; in truth I am ;—a power beyond my rival's guards my way I view thee pale and trembling for my fate, if captured by Alraschid ; now I guess a sister's sufferings ;—dry those streaming eyes. Orasmyn's sword shall pay their tears with blood ! this arm is destined to avenge our race.

Ceph. Ha ! talk'st thou of revenge and death ?—ye gods ! can hellish thoughts lurk in so fair an ambush ? kind, lovely boy, say I mistook thy speech. Can lips so smiling thirst for blood ? ah ! whose ?

Oras. Alraschid's ; false, usurping, cruel tyrant ! that smothering torch, which all my kinsman's fury had not breath to rouse, those piteous sighs have lighted into flame ; have I a heart, and lacks it warmth to kindle at a sister's wrongs ? beloved Cephania ! no, by

earth and heaven I swear! Alraschid falls by thine Orasmyn's arm!

Ceph. Inhuman boy! first plant thy poniard here.

Oras. How says my sister?

Ceph. Oh! I abjure that name; are wo and widowhood a brother's gift? thou rash, deceived distracting youth! learn that I love the man thou think'st I hate; by holiest passion, not a tyrant's power, the glorious, generous Alraschid reigns, throned in my heart, and lord of all its fires!

Oras. Amazing words!

Ceph. Hear me; when first I wore his conquering father's chain, the gallant prince in secret soothed a little orphan's wo; and even while I strove to hate him, stole my love. Scarce had the sceptre to his hand devolved, ere knelt the monarch at his bondsmaid's feet, " daughter of Ali!" cried he. " our sires in life were foes; o! be their hatred buried with their dust, and let the diadem they crossly claimed be shared in friendship by their gentler heirs!"

Oras. Could such pure jüstice be a tyrant's act?

Ceph. Brand not my hero with a term so foul: all Bagdat blesses his paternal care, and *father of his people* is the glorious boast, that crowns his name beyond a Cæsar's empty vaunt! to reign, is nothing: but to reign *beloved*, is god's true copy and the type of heaven!

Oras. Your words amaze! confound, distract me; ah! wherefore have I sworn to slay this man?

Ceph. Sworn! just gods! what fatal oath——

Oras. Ay! tis rightly termed—a *fatal* oath indeed! but earth heard and heaven hath recorded it; our father's awful ghost is witness to my pledge!

Ceph. Distraction! misery! what dæmon tempted thee to sin so deep?

Oras. Oh! twas a dark, dreadful being; but one so powerful, so *very* powerful, I dare not thwart his will——

Ceph. Disclose the wretch, that with some sudden curse——

Oras. (*grasps her hand tremulously*) Hush! hush! perchance he hears us now——

Ceph. Ha! where is the slave concealed?

Oras. Nay, hush! (*he looks fearfully around—at that instant the* ÆTHIOP *emerges from concealing trees and stands before him*) ah! behold him; there! there!

Ceph. (*gazing indignantly*) Fiend abhorred! thou subtle tempter of ingenuous youth! now let my nimble curses strike and——

ALMANZOR *steps forward to the Æthiop's side, and takes his hand.*

Ah! what silver-headed seer is he, who knits his ancient palm to hellish hands, and lends a reverend sanction to the damned? say it is not—in mercy! *not* Almanzor——

Alm. (*advancing*) Beloved niece!

Ceph. Avaunt! for now I curse my birth, my being; and all kindred blood! fell murderer! wouldst thou? no, no, that heart was once so kind. (*she suddenly casts herself at his feet*) Behold! I clasp thy knees and bathe them with my tears! dear venerable man! prove thou art still my uncle, and say thou hast not leagued against my husband's life!

Alm. Is this my welcome? dost thou plead for him and by a husband's name? my age is choleric—be wary how its fires are stirred! husband! husband! (*grasps Cephania's hand, and drags her towards the Æthiop*) forget that name for ever, or address it—*here!*

Ceph. (*recoiling wildly*) To plague and to contagion rather! gods! do I dream! brain! brain! start not quite—(*she presses her forehead between her hands for an instant, and then addresses rapidly with a desperate look and accent*) men! men! one brief word decides the fate of all; speak! is murder your resolve?

Alm. By allah! yea! this night Alraschid dies!

Ceph. Nay, then I knew my course! (*calling aloud*) my guards!

Oras. (*rushing to her*) Sister! would'st thou betray——

Ceph. Hence! hence! let slaughter revel in my house's blood! I doom ye all to save a husband: guards! guards!

Alm (*drawing a dagger*) Unnatural traitress!

Æth. (*catching his arm*) Forbear! though countless thousands wait her call, no eye, save singly hers, may find our forms. (*snatches Cephania s hand, and kisses it fervently*) Glorious fair! thus in her rage and fury do I woo my love!

Ceph. Ruffian! avaunt—help! help!

Æth. Yet once again! now hail, Cephania! hail, the Æthiop's bride!

Ceph. (*tearing herself from his embrace*) Guards! help! help! (*the Æthiop waving his wand triumphantly withdraws his companions into the bower—at the same moment, the women and slaves of the sultana rush in all directions forward, and surround their mistress*)

Im. Gracious lady! whence these cries?

Ceph. Advance! enter yon bower and quickly seize: yet hold! (*she hesitates*) gods! what would I do? destroy a brother's life? horror! horror!

Im. Merciful allah! convulsive terrors shake you.

Ceph. (*attempting to collect herself*) As I reposed within yon bower, a serpent crawled upon my seat, unawares; the reptile startled me, but I escaped its bite.

Im. Swift let your slaves explore the bower, and—

Ceph. (*flings herself between them*) Hold! I charge you on your lives forbear! perchance its sting were mortal; no, let the monster peacefully depart: this quarter of the gardens shall awhile be quitted. Immyne! lend thine arm and lead me hence—let *all* retire with me. (*Cephania leads the way, when the Æthiop leading forth his companions appears at the entrance of the bower*)

Ceph. (*starting*) Madness and ruin! why are ye seen? hence! hence! begone!

Im. Lady !

Ceph. (*turning to her train half-frenzied*) Betray them not ! whate'er their crime, forbear ! nay, I command you let them freely pass.

Im. Whom ? gracious queen !

Ceph. These three imprudent strangers. (*slaves all look around them rapidly, and in apparent consternation*)

Im. Where, lady. may we seek them ?

Ceph. Gods ! they approach—there ! there !

Im. (*looking as Cephania's finger points*) I only can perceive the citron tree, scattering its blossoms as the zephyr stirs it. (*the Æthiop leading his companions, passes slowly out of sight, while Cephania, gasping and wonder struck, sustains herself by Immyne's arm*)

Ceph. (*after a pause*) Infernal powers ! can ye work so cunningly. Immyne ! thou art right; now my eyes are clear again ; twas but the quaint illusion of a feverish brain !

Im. Beloved mistress ! you are faint and pale ; the recent terror has disturbed your mind.

Ceph. It hath in truth Immyne ! give me a moment's pause to collect my spirits. (*aside*) This night the blow is threatened. What if I seek Alraschid instantly, win by tears and prayers a solemn promise of his mercy ere I breathe the tale, and then——

GIAFAR *is seen traversing the garden.*

Im. Lady ! the vizier hastens to your presence.

Giaf. Sultana ! the great Alraschid sends me to your feet. Our royal master, not less renowned for piety than valor, laboring to avert the prophet's wrath from this offending land, hath imposed upon himself a solemn penance ; and now within his chamber is locked in solitary prayer : it is enjoined that till to-morrow's dawn, no earthly form or voice obtrude between his lifted soul and heaven !

Ceph. (*aside*) Disastrous chance ! not till to-morrow, said you ?

Giaf. Even so, lady ! hath the caliph sworn:

Ceph. (*aside*) To morrow!—ah, Alraschid! never may that morrow dawn for *thee!* might I confide in Giafar? no, no, the viziers all are hostile to my race; only with Alraschid lies my hope. Giafar! I grieve that I must break the caliph's law, but an affair of moment leads me to his presence.

Giaf. Lady! forgive the lowliest of your servants if he bars your way; you are my revered mistress ever; but I am sworn upon this duty, and dare not quit my oaths.

Ceph. (*proudly*) This to Cephania! I am forgotten sure!—but mark me, lord! behold this ring! all may remember on my bridal day, Alraschid drew the sparkling circlet on my finger and by a lover's strongest vow engaged his faith, whenever I gave or sent it back, to yield whatever suit of mine accompanied the pledge. Now, officious lord! stand I still forbidden?—ha!

Giaf. (*bowing respectfully*) I recognise my sovereign's pledge, and may not interdict the claim it vouches.

Ceph. Immyne! bear with thy utmost speed this jewel to the caliph, none dare question such a passport, and in Cephania's name demand an instant interview.

[*exit Immyne*

Giaf. Forgive my honest zeal; but lady, sure some strange disorder shakes your frame. Alas! what secret grief; might Giafar presume——

Ceph. (*aside*) His keen suspicious eyes look through me; nay, I must counterfeit. You are mistaken; my spirits hold their tenor evenly; nay, I could be joyous! come! let sports and pleasures crown the hour—here will I rest awhile. (*slaves advance, and place cushions in the form of a throne, on which Cephania reclines—Giafar follows the direction of her hand, and stands by her side*) Now let my slaves exert their skill. (*a ballet is commenced by the female slaves of the sultana—suddenly, distant cries of* pursue! pursue! *interrupt the festivity—the* ARAB, *who appeared in the first scene, is perceived flying across the extremity of the garden followed by guards—he bursts through the*

dancers, who shriek and disperse—a massive chain fastened to his left wrist drags after him—panting and breathless he gains the front)

Arab. Save me! (*sees Cephania*) ha! *you* will—yes, yes, *you* will save me! (*flings himself before her*)

Ceph. (*rising*) Great allah! tis the very arab: yea, he who but yester morning——

Giaf. (*aside*) Confusion! escaped! and with Cephania!—sultana! hear him not;—guards! drag him hence!

Arab. No, no; daughter of Ali! guard thy kinsman's slave:—I have burst my cell, outflown my guards, and fate itself directs me to thy feet.

Giaf. (*to guards*) Advance!

Ceph. Nay, hold! it is your queen's command!—arab! thou art safe—declare thy grievance.

Arab. Angel! racks have extorted from my quivering lips, words dearer than my life; but hear me yet, and all may be repaired——

Ceph. Speak!

IMMYNE, *who has been seen returning during the latter speeches, now gains the front, and instantly casts herself between the arab and Cephania.*

Im. Sultana! with mercy view your trembling slave!

Ceph. Immyne!

Im. The ring! the *ring!* just as I reached the royal chamber to present the pledge, a hand unknown grasped mine, and suddenly the jewel vanished!

Ceph. Where is the traitor who has dared——

the ÆTHIOP *rushes to the bridge in the centre of the stage, and exultingly displays the ring.*

Ah! tis he, tis *he!*—the dreadful one! (*the Æthiop scornfully smiles and fixes it on his finger*) despair! despair! (*she sinks back insensible upon the cushions*)

Giaf. Ha! she faints!—triumphant chance! (*to guards*) swift seize your prisoner—NOW!

Arab. (*struggling*) Forbear!—sultana! mistress!

Giaf. She hears not, helps not, away ! (*the guards drag the arab backward, while the women cluster about the throne, where their mistress lies insensible—the Æthiop remains in the posture of exultation, and the curtain falls upon the scene*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I—*an inner cell of the catacombs.*

enter ORASMYN, *as from the principal vault, followed by the* ÆTHIOP, *who bears the poniard from the altar.*

Oras. Away, away! remorseless being ! pursue me not to damn me.

Æth. Infatuated boy! I follow to preserve thee !—whither would'st thou fly ?

Oras. To my native desert. The tenants of the wilderness are savage, but man, social man is more inexorable far !—oh ! if pity ever dawned upon that dark bosom, permit my flight, while yet these hands are undefiled with blood !

Æth. Fantastic scruples !—shrinks thy nice conscience at a just revenge, and dreads it not some direr penalty for broken sacraments and deities adjured in vain ?—thine oath ! prince ! think upon thine oath !

Oras. I do, with horror, with despair !

enter ALMANZOR, *from behind.*

Alm. How, now ! wherefore have you thus withdrawn from our assembled friends ; they call upon their prince ;—haste, Orasmyn, and rejoin them ere they quit the altar. (*some few notes of a religious chant strike on the ear*) Hark ! the last dread covenant now murmurs on their lips.

Oras. Would I were in my grave !

Æth. Beware the doom entailed on perjured heads ! (*he passes the boy's hands to Almanzor*) Our conference concludes. My friends ! complete your vows, then pass undaunted to the glorious act that crowns this scheme of wonders ; the fatal minutes speed : one little hour yet scarce remains to shade and silence, ere flames and groans demand the rest of night Is our muster perfect ? hath each leader conned his separate charge ?

Alm. By thy strict counsels all our plan is framed. Hassan fires the bezestein. Abudah storms the tower beyond. Orasmyn, by myself accompanied, assails Alraschid.

Æth. Ay ! *thou* art his comrade, only *thou* : my charms would else prove vain.

Alm. Enough ! I pant for vengeance—come !

Æth. Soft ye ! one moment yet ; here, dear confederates we part.

Alm. How say you ! part ?

Æth. We sunder here, to meet in triumph, or to meet no more. A living Ali only may revenge the Ali lost ; so destiny decrees ! lo ! ye, the farewell gifts my friendship hath prepared—this poniard and this wand ! (*gives the poniard to Orasmyn. and the wand to Almanzor*) employ them rightly, and success is yours.

Alm. Hold ! while linked with thee each daring wonder seems an easy task, whose power is stronger than the kings of earth ; but thy mysterious aid withdrawn—

Æth. Doubt not, unseen, unheard, my watchful spirit still shall guard your course ; my spells already bind Alraschid's guards in an unstirring sleep : the wand securely leads you to the tyrant's couch. My second gift Orasmyn guesses how to use.

Alm. Our spirits stand confirmed ! away to vengeance !

Æth. To fame, to glory, and a hero's joys ! farewell ! the watchful Æthiop still protects your way.

[*exeunt separately*

SCENE II—*inside of Alexis's cabin—a banquet set out with lights.*

enter ZOE, *brilliantly habited, and* CONSTANTINE.

Zoe. Speed! speed! good cousin; make all in readiness for my illustrious guests: do not my fine robes become me?

Const. Oh! you look and move to a miracle. Mercy on the hearts of all emirs and cadies. I vow I tremble for myself: nay, I dare gaze no longer!

Zoe. Away, you flatterer, hie to your post; and have a care my visitors are introduced with due ceremony. Away! [*exit Constantine*] methinks I tread on air, and all my nimble spirits spring to the adventure! (*knocking without*) punctual to the moment! oh! were our magistrate but as brisk in his duties as his amours, who would complain of the law's delay?

Constantine ushers in BENMOUSSAFF.

Ben. Constellation! human wonder! is it mere earthly woman I behold, or some unsteady star just fallen from the sphere?

Zoe. Pure flesh and blood, I assure your worship; but had I been one of the heavenly bodies you talk of, I might indeed have fallen if such a seducer had attracted me to earth.

Ben. Extatic moment! oh! I can't sustain it; I'm all in a soft delirium lost——

Zoe. I have provided a poor banquet for your entertainment: come, let me invite your worship to partake! (*they sit with great ceremony*) nay, each shall carve for the other; the viands will be doubly relished when mutually presented by the hand we love!

Ben. Was there ever such an engaging creature! (*aside*) she is distractedly fond; I can read in her eyes the vehemence of her passion.

Zoe. (*filling a goblet with wine, touches it with her lip, and then passes it to Benmoussaff*) I drink to the

health of him whom I adore! will your worship pledge me?

Ben. Wine! Mahomet forbids it.

Zoe. Zoe recommends it!

Ben. Enough! thou art my new faith, and thus I wash down the scruples of my old. (*drinks*) I protest it tickles and tingles marvellously. Nay, tis a very innocent cordial. (*drinks*) It cheereth the heart of man and; nay, tis your only drink for elegant gallantry. (*drinks again*) Fair Zoe! I entreat one boon, a chaste salute!

Zoe. Fy! fy! so early, your worship.

Ben. Nay, prithee! aha! I must, I will—(*a second knocking*)

Zoe. Hold! somebody knocks.

Ben. Some idle boys, I'll have them ducked in the Tygris.

enter CONSTANTINE.

Const. Oh! cousin, cousin! I vow here's the emir, Mustapha, at the gate—seeing lights and hearing voices at this unusual hour, he insists upon entering and searching the house for suspicious characters.

Ben. Search the house! I would not be found by him in it for a kiss round the caliph's haram. He's my sworn enemy, and out of very malice would report our intrigue to my wife, and then——(*knocks again*)

Const. There, hear how impatient! what's to be done?

Zoe. I have it: your worship can lay concealed for a minute in one of these chests that have brought home my fine new clothes. The emir finding the apartment vacant will depart satisfied directly.

Ben. A magistrate squeezed into a chest! what will become of my dignity?

Zoe. You shall take it along with you; twill lie in a narrow compass. (*he gets into the chest*)

Ben. But Zoe, should he look into the chest.

Zoe. (*squeezing him down*) To prevent that, I'll fasten the lid. (*turns the key and takes it out*) Ha! ha!

oh! cupid! what a triumph. Myrtle-chains may entangle some lovers, but for mine, I prefer the security of a lock and key.

Constantine introduces MUSTAPHA.

Must. My fair mistress Zoe. Thus doth the lofty-one prostrate himself. (*kneels*) Here let me plead my passion in accents tuneful as the turtle's wail. Ugh! ugh! by the way waiting so long at your door in the night-air, has brought on my winter cough.

Zoe. I protest, my lord, I am very sorry; but my neighbors are so watchful I was fearful of admitting you, till I had ascertained no spy was lurking under the wall.

Must. I applaud your precaution, it behoves us to be circumspect in the management of our amour; that wife of mine. but in sight of heaven I'll not mention the devil. So that despicable old mummy Benmoussaff affected to address you, eh? the ridiculous vanity of some men! but you treated him as he deserved.

Zoe. I hope so. my lord.

Must. The wretch is my antipathy; he is positively a walking horror, and ought to be shut up for life; dont you agree with me?

Zoe. Perfectly, my lord, "*shut up for life*," is my very sentence!

Ben. (*from the chest*) Oh!

Must. What's that?

Zoe. Only an echo: the very walls and furniture agree with our opinion. (*knocking without*)

Must. That's another echo! what's that?

Zoe. I am as ignorant as yourself. (*aside*) Sure they have not arrived so early.

enter CONSTANTINE *frightened.*

Const. (*aside to Zoe*) Oh! dear cousin, dont be angry with me, but such an accident——

Zoe. What? what?

Const. When I took the money for Alexis's release,

I forgot tc tell the gaoler to detain him till next morning; and he is now at the gate.

Zoe. Undone! undone! you have ruined me! his impetuous temper will mar every thing.

Must. Eh! how! what's the affair? you seem terrified.

Zoe. Truly I have cause: my husband is now without the gate

Must. Would I were in the same situation. Cockatriçe! you have plotted this to abuse me.

Zoe. No! by every sacred name I swear I was ignorant till this very moment of his release from prison. (*knocking repeated*)

Alex. (*without*) Why, Zoe, wife, house!

Must. What's to be done: if he enters I'm ruined!

Zoe. Speak to him through the casement, Constantine, and make some excuse to send him away.

Const. What shall I say?

Zoe Say I am ill, very ill.

Must. (*in his fright*) Yes, I am very ill.

Const. (*through casement at side scene*) Dear cousin, pray go away for a while Zoe is very ill.

Alex. (*without*) Ill! and I not with her! open instantly.

Zoe No, no, tell him I am at my prayers.

Must. I'll begin mine this moment.

Const. No, she's not ill; but she's at her prayers.

Zoe. (*prompting him*) And must not be disturbed.

Const. And must not be disturbed.

Alex Young traitor, this is false.

Zoe. (*forgetting herself puts her head out*) I tell you it's true: I'm at my prayers, and must not be disturbed.

Alex. The devil you are! now then, if my foot can split a door——

Zoe. Hold! hold! it shall be opened to you. Oh, my lord! you must conceal yourself.

Must. (*in violent alarm*) Where? where?

Zoe. Here luckily is an empty chest; in, in.

Must. But when shall I get out?

Zoe. No words; I'll provide for your release. (*she fastens him in*) Oh! this unlucky return! if Alexis had been confined but one hour longer, all my projects would have stood secure, but his temper is so violent——

enter ALEXIS.

Alex. So. I am admitted to my own house at last; I hope I dont interrupt my wife's devotions too early. (*he sees the banquet and lights, then Zoe in her splendid dress, as she advances with a smile to receive him*) Am I awake? no, no, I dream; at least I hope so. Is this a camel-driver's cabin, this the wife of his poverty?

Zoe. Now spirit of my sex, befriend me! welcome, Alexis! welcome! how! you reject my hand? are you not glad to see me?

Alex. I cannot speak to her. Zoe! ought I to receive your hand? is it the same pure hand I pressed at parting? go! go! I know it not; tis disguised in jewels.

Zoe. The ring you gave me at the altar is among them.

Alex. Oh, Zoe! Zoe! do not distract me. Have you, I cannot bear the thought; explain these riddles or you break my heart. (*he flings himself into a chair*)

Zoe. Poor fellow! but I must still dissemble. What is it you would inquire?

Alex. Your dress, these lights, this banquet: what does it mean?

Zoe. I expect company.

Alex. Fiends and fury! do you own it to my face? appoint gallants, and bid your husband witness their reception!

Zoe. I did not impose any such trial of your politeness: you need not stay till my visitors arrive.

Alex. I shall run mad; nay, sure I am so now. What! turn the tame cuckold, and draw the curtains on my own dishonor! no, no; if my brows must be goaded, let the artificers of horns beware of their point.

(*a knocking*) Ha ! the signal is given ; now then for discovery of all.

enter CONSTANTINE.

Alex. (*catching him by the collar*) Ha ! thou little infamy ! thou egg of baseness cracking in the shell ! confess thy treacheries, or look for doomsday suddenly.

Const. Prithee, good cousin, what must I confess ?

Alex. Dissimulating imp ! these visitors : who are they ?

Const. Oh ! my cousin Zoe's invited guests.

Alex. Tartarus and the furies ! they own it ; own it to my face !

Const. Why not ? such company bring credit to your door : two of the noblest dames in Bagdat.

Alex. Dames ! said you ?—dames !

Const. Ay, and stately ones :—the ladies Grimnigra and Grumnildra : the wives of the emir Mustapha and the cadi Benmoussaff, are now in their palanquins at the door.

Alex. Miracles ! why Zoe, can this be ?

Zoe. I disdain to answer. (*to Constantine*) Usher these illustrious ladies into my presence.

Alex. Women of quality visit a camel driver's wife ! where shall I run to 'scape them ? how shall I hide me ?

Zoe. No, I insist that you remain upon the spot.

enter GRIMNIGRA *and* GRUMNILDRA.

Grim. Well, Zoe, we attend your summons :—my estimable Grumnildra is as impatient as myself to learn the drift of your request.

Grum. Ay, child !—you mention treasures of ours having accidentally fallen into your possession—is't not so ?

Zoe. Precisely the case, my ladies.

Alex. (*shuffling behind the table*) Oho ! a discovered treasure : this explains madam's finery

Grim. Prithee, Zoe, what uneasy looking man is

that? he, who fidgets about in the corner of the room.

Zoe. Only a person I call husband, my lady: a little awe-struck at your presence. You perceive he knows his distance.

Grim. I do; the order you preserve in your household is creditable to your judgment: poor man, let him remain. Now, to the business: these treasures, Zoe?

Zoe. Are such as your ladyships, doubtless, will deem inestimable; I hold them at this moment securely under my own lock and key; and might so detain them unsuspected by any here, but my heart is an honest one and longs for nothing more sincerely than to restore stray chattels into the hands of their real owners

Grum. Honorable creature!

Grim. A pattern of morals! I am all curiosity to behold these treasures.

Zoe. Yonder chests contain them. You will permit my husband to be present while you examine the contents of each, and the keys are at your service.

AIR—ZOE.

These keys can a treasure unfold,
More precious than jewels or gold—
To judge by myself for each wife,
Tis treasure more worth than her life!
Then, ladies, advance, yet, soft, prithee stay,
One word to my husband I first fain would say;
Fal lal de ral de ra.

(*to Alexis*)

These keys can dispense sovereign cure
For torments the jealous endure,
One peep in yon mystical chest
Turns your heart-ache at once to a jest.
Now, ladies, advance, I present you these keys,
Dispose of the treasures within as you please;
Fal lal de ral de ra.

(*each wife opens a chest to the last notes of the song— Mustapha and Benmoussaff put up their heads*)

Grim. I'm petrified!

Ben. I'm suffocated!

Alex I'm transported!—oh, Zoe, Zoe! (*runs and embraces her*)

Grum. Come forth, thou sensual caitiff!

Grim. Libertine, dislodge! (*they drag their husbands forward*)

Alex. Ha, ha, ha!—all hail, ye venerable Tarquins. Hold sides, or I shall die. Ha, ha, ha!

Grim Dost thou expect to survive this mortal affront to my honor?

Must. No; I'm doomed and dead already.

Grum. And thou! by all my injuries I swear——

Ben Not yet. I'm taken of the sudden strangely. Nay, let me go home; I'm very ill.

Must. I think I feel an odd twinge too.

Grim Five hundred strokes of the bastinado, administered in the presence of my cousin the mufti, I prescribe for *thee;* my black slaves shall apply the cure

Grum. Thank heaven, I have an arm that can avenge itself.

Ben. I know it, and I venerate its wondrous mightiness.

Zoe Ladies, I commend my reverend gallants to your indulgence. Ridicule is the best corrective of the vicious, and perhaps I have drenched my patients with a sufficient dose. Alexis! forgive the momentary trial I made of your temper. Believe me, I probed the wound, only that I might close it with security for ever. Mine is the general cause of wives: if a victory attained by stratagem be honorable among mighty warriors, it cannot be reproachful to a weak unaided woman; and while offended morals are revenged with playfulness, I trust even prudery itself will scarce arraign the justice or the delicacy of Zoe the grecian wife.

SEPTETTO.

Zoe. La lira! la lira!
The battle is done,
A victory won,
And Zoe reigns queen of the field.

Alex. La lira! la lira!
My jealousy flies,
Subdued by those eyes,
Where the banner of faith is reveal'd.

Grim. La lira! la lira!
My wandering love,
Restored to his dove—
Must From her bosom swears never to roam.

Grum. La lira! la lira!
Men knowing their duty,
Who seek for true beauty—
Ben. Will find the dear angel at home.

Const. La lira! la lira!
Thrice happy the lives
Of husbands and wives,
With such virtues and graces possest.

All. La lira! la lira!
We'll rival the loves
Of the murmuring doves,
And exist but each other to bless. [*exeunt*

SCENE III—*a gallery lighted fe bly by a lamp, leading to the caliph's apartments.*

enter CEPHANIA *and* IMMYNE.

Ceph. Begone, Immyne! leave me to my fate!

Im My royal mistress! in this distraction? nay, I lare not quit you thus; tis midnight: wherefore forsake your couch, to traverse these solitary galleries and pause at last upon this silent spot?

Ceph. Here. have I reached the goal I sought; this loor conducts by a private passage to the caliph's chamber. Giafar's stern command hath barred all other access. Nay, get thee hence; my direful enterprize dmits no aid of thine?

Im. Lady!

Ceph. Now, I command thee—hence! (*Immyne bows and retires*) Yes, my Alraschid! our mutual hour of destiny is come; we are *one*, indissolubly *one*. By love and by religion joined, whose arms shall sunder us? not the murderer's; no, no; if the fatal blow must fall, through the wife's bosom it assails the husband: one death, one grave, one spirit married to eternity! (*she approaches the door and strikes against it*) ho! who waits within? (*a pause*) ha! no reply! two pages are ever stationed next this door—tis firmly barred within. (*she strikes again more eagerly*) Allah! still this distracting silence. Hath the destroying dagger then already pierced—horror! horror! hear me, Alraschid! (*the closing of a heavy portal sounds from the side of the gallery by which she has advanced*) ah! some closing portal echoes through the gallery, footsteps advance; yon quivering lamp now gleams upon a figure. Ha! it is, it *is* the murderer's step! sustain me, heaven! father of mercies guard Alraschid! (*she faintly totters to some pillars in the side scene, and conceals herself between them*)

enter ALMANZOR, *hurrying forward* ORASMYN.

Alm. Swifter, nay, swifter! weak, timid boy! you tremble!

Oras. Well I may! methinks at every step, I wade through streams of blood, and hear some dying groan beneath me!

Alm. Silence, and proceed! (*regarding the door attentively*) yea! tis here we enter, so the Æthiop counselled; the phœnix dying to revive by fire denotes the portal. Hail! glorious symbol of an empire's fate. So Bagdat's throne by midnight sinks to rise thrice glorious with succeeding morn! come, faithful talisman, complete thy task! (*he strikes against the door with the wand, instantly it springs open and displays upon its inner side, in glaring characters,* "ADVANCE!") the last obedience to our charm is yielded, and lo! a word of inspiration cheers our cause! advance! tis fate's

own mighty sign! haste! favorite of the stars! obey the call! (*he turns to the front where Orasmyn stands gazing upon the sign, as Almanzor approaches him he turns away, and with frenzied earnestness kneels—Almanzor struck with his action, pauses in silence by his side—Cephania at the same time steals forward from her concealment and glides through the door*)

Ceph. Allah! be my guide!

Oras. Oh! thou, that in this dark and silent hour, viewest and hearest all things; nay, readest in the heart that secret thought, lips never yet have matched with sound, be witness that thy kneeling creature. in this tremendous act obeys but thy command, through seeming oracles declared! perplexed! confounded, half distracted; if through his human ignorance he errs, vouchsafe forgiveness to the witless sin, and take his victim to eternal bliss! (*he rises*) now, I am yours!

Alm. Thou art heaven s! offer one sacrifice and win its love for ever! advance, advance! (*he passes through the portal, hurrying Orasmyn after him*)

SCENE IV—*the apartment of Alraschid—the sleeping chamber—ottomans elevated form his couch, surmounted by a splendid canopy—an ante-chamber extends beyond, terminated by a portal—lights are burning in tripods, and two pages, apparently locked in slumber, lay near the entrance of the chamber*—CEPHANIA *enters cautiously through the portal, at the extremity of the scene.*

Ceph. I've gained the chamber—(*she advances*) how! all in unguarded sleep!—Murteza! Chebib! slothful pages! rouse. They stir not:—scarcely breathe! some subtle, wicked charm lays all their faculties as in a death. Angels guard us! (*she passes quickly onward to Alraschid's couch*) My lord! my love! my life!—Alraschid wake!—no word?—what sorcery's here?—no answer yet? nay. triumph fiends! and now fond heart despair. They come—the fatal por-

ard gleams—mercy! mercy! heaven! (*she conceals herself in the silken drapery which flows from the canopy beside the couch*)

ALMANZOR *and* ORASMYN *enter from the further portal, which closes after them—they advance till they stand opposite the couch of the caliph.*

Alm. Tis crowned!—o! boundless joy! our cause is crowned!—behold the tyrant bound in magic sleep! god of my fathers! thanks—eternal thanks! all my triumphant wishes touch their verge—nay, my soul aches with transport. Strike, boy, strike!

Oras. One moment yet; one little moment!

Alm. Tis heaven's command; to pause would damn thee. Plunge the avenging poniard to his heart then on his dying ear shout terribly—"tis Ali's son who smites Alraschid!" (*he drags Orasmyn to the couch*) be sudden! strike! (*Orasmyn lifts his arm, Cephania suddenly casts herself forward to receive the blow*)

Ceph. Yea! strike; with Ali's blood let Ali's poniard gleam!

Oras. (*drops the dagger and recoils*) Horror!—gods! would I pierce a sister's bosom?

Ceph. Murderer, strike!—a double sacrifice invites thy blow; the wife will perish with her wedded lord.

Alm. Distracted wretch! begone—avoid our fury!

Ceph. Never! never! here do I fix my everlasting hold. Avaunt! detested homicides! or my despairing cries shall call both men and gods to aid me.

Alm. Thy house's curse o'erwhelm thee, traitress! thus let my rage——(*as he attempts to seize her, she snatches up the poniard Orasmyn has dropped at her feet, and repels him*)

Ceph. Ha! my father's poniard arms my hand, and his great spirit nerves my heart. Hence, hoary ruffian, hence! heaven and the tomb alike befriend my cause, and ghosts and angels combat by my side.

Alm. Perdition to my hopes! thus, visionary wretch, to end thy dream! (*he wrests the dagger from her hand, drags her forward, and is about to stab her*)

Oras. Hold! her blood is mine; spare my sister!

Alm. Then swift redeem her with a nobler victim.

Oras (*refusing the dagger*) No, no, no! if the heavens claim a sacrifice, here let their thunder strike. I yield this wretched life a forfeit for my broken vows—but will not:—no, no, I cannot *murder!*

Ceph. Blessed be my brother! blessed! blessed!—(*she springs towards him, and they enfold each other*)

Alm. Perjured slave! may an eternal curse.—Rouse, maddening rage! inspire an old man's arm with dreadful force, and——

Oras. and Ceph. (*clinging to him*) Mercy! mercy!

Alm. Off, off! ye vile degenerate pair! the ancient lion rouses ere it dies, and thus devotes its latest prey! (*he breaks from them*)

Ceph. Yawn earth! and bury my despair! (*she dashes herself upon the ground—Orasmyn kneels by her side—Almanzor springs upon the couch to immolate his victim—at the moment his dagger is uplifted, the caliph starts from his apparent slumber, and catches the old man's arm—the curtains behind the couch spring aside, and archers, with their bows bent, form a wall around the prince—the hangings which cover the upper section of the front scene draw up, and exhibit an open saloon, extending over the architroon, brilliantly lighted, and filled with characters—at the front of its ballustrade the various conspirators are ranged as captives, kneeling and surrounded by guards—the pages in the room beneath spring forward in attitudes, and the portal at the extremity of the scene opens, through which* GIAFAR *and attendants with torches enter—the entire grouping and illumination is instant and simultaneous*)

Alrasc. Thus heaven in thunder vindicates its own!

Alm. Cursed be the hour, cursed the false star that rules it, and damned the juggling tongue that tempted to betray!—is all o'erwhelmed! fiend! traitor! Æthiop! where art *thou?*

Alrasc. Behold him in thy sovereign and thy judge. Water hath cleansed the Æthiop's skin, but what

blest unguent purifies a traitor's heart? (*he flies to Cephania and lifts her in his arms*) here let my wonder and my transport kneel! look up, excellent pattern of thy sex, and let a doting husband call thee back to life; nay, gaze upon the ring with which thou wert espoused. Ha! said I not truly, love? "Cephania is the Æthiop's bride."

Ceph. A strange confused intelligence dawns o'er me; I know not yet if it be joy or pain—yet sure *those* lips are harbingers of blessings only!

Alrasc. Forgive too hard a trial of thy glorious faith—that e'er I doubted is my lasting shame.

Giaf. (*advancing with the arab*) My prince! rather on your slave that shame should fall:—my jealous caution was the cause of each deceit. Lady! view well this arab's face.

Ceph. Ha! Almanzor's, my stern uncle's slave, who——

Arab. Yea, that wretched man, whose fatal negligence betrayed a noble master's cause, and crushed the glorious hopes of all his tribe. Nay, I deserve thy curse.

Alrasc. Perchance her blessing, rather. A providence, disguised like chance, disclosed through this vile worm a mighty plot. Life and empire moved but half my care But oh! Cephania's love! a doubt of that were madness. I knew not if her heart were truly mine. I dreaded lest her kinsmen's wiles—ah, love! forgive such thoughts;—I wound about thee a close studious snare: thy women were counselled to my purpose, perpetual stratagem beset thy steps, whilst I, impenetrably shrouded, watched o'er all.

Ceph. Ha! it dawns more clear, and now the full conviction flashes to my heart. Oh! thou dear impostor, these gushing tears must chide thee, not my words. But oh! one boon, one dear, *dear* boon. (*she takes Orasmyn's hand, then looks pleadingly in Alraschid's face*) Orasmyn is Cephania's brother.

Alrasc. He is Alraschid's! in this fraternal pressure we twine the olive round our father's graves. (*they em-*

brace) For his dear sake let mercy wildly cover an offending tribe. Hear all of Ali's blood ! my vanquished enemies ! Orasmyn's friendship and Cephania's love are your accepted ransom. Live ! be free, be happy ! thus doth Alraschid vindicate his reign. *(the various conspirators cast themselves in postures of homage —Almanzor alone remains erect)*

Alm. Apostates ! recreants without a name ! ay, kneel to man : be spurned by heaven ! bless your destroyer, and so curse yourselves ! still one unconquerable spirit soars beyond the reach of shame. Yea, Alraschid ! usurper ! tyrant ! Almanzor, faithful to his godlike stock, still curses thee in bitterness of soul. Thus compassed round by hireling slaves, my honest lip still bids thee tremble. Thy mercy ! mercy from thee ! ha ! ha ! dare not mock me, vain one, dare not ! mark me ! if e'er again this arm is free, again it grasps a poniard ! again it menaces a tyrant's heart.

Alrasc. (*after a pause*) Giafar, swear to me an oath : whatever fate betide thy prince, this man in safety passes from my court. Swear !

Giaf. By allah and his prophet, yea !

Alrasc. (advancing to Almanzor) Almanzor, thou hast termed me TYRANT—am I that name ? search thy heart deeply, and inquire the truth. If thou didst wrong me, let justice triumph over passion ; but if the accusation stand confirmed, thy foe and the world's enemy are one. Satisfy thyself, and redress thy fellow-creatures. (*gives his dagger to Almanzor, and presents his breast to meet it*)

Alm. (*trembling with contending passions*) Thou *art* a tyrant—a very tyrant ! for thou wilt not leave thy foe even the liberty to hate. (*he drops the dagger*)

Alrasc. O glad return of wandered nobleness ! thus let my arms——

Alm. (*recoiling*) Nay, by your leave—we touch not ; I wish no more to hate, but feel I ne'er can love. For fifteen years I lived but while I cursed thee. Well, well ! tis o'er. I'll to my desert ; live but a little to forget the world, and be myself forgotten ! (*as he*

turns to quit the scene, Orasmyn springs to him and clasps his knees)

Oras Uncle ! uncle ! you reared me, fostered me ; shall I forsake you now ? o, my full heart ! no, no. Lead to the desert, uncle ! I'll follow you till death !

Alm. My boy ! my sweetest nursling ! death hath no pang past quitting thee. Nay, by these tears—this kiss—tis so——*(suddenly he snatches Orasmyn to his heart, then places him between Alraschid and Cephania)* take him—he is yours ! farewell ! farewell !

[*he rushes out*

Oras. Nay, hear me uncle ! hear your faithful boy !

Ceph. (*restraining him)* Rest thee, beloved Orasmyn ! anon, our uncle's stormy passions will, with a natural cadence sink ; and peace, like a fine soft rainbow, meekly settle on his closing day. O ! ye dear rivals ! how am I blessed to blend you in my heart ! there live to reign for ever—there in holiest brotherhood divide your own ! (*she folds their hands in each others)*

FINALE.

Joy ! joy ! joy !
Raise the shout, and pierce the skies !
Love is born, as hatred dies,
Arabian boy !
Allah crowns thy destinies,
Joy ! joy ! joy !

THE END OF THE ÆTHIOP.

FROM THE RICHMOND (VIR.) ENQUIRER.

We cannot place the following verses in the hands of the reader, without expressing the satisfaction which their perusal has given ourselves. It is a sweet and a diversified description of " THE SON OF OCEAN," *in the various shapes in which his favorite element may place him, and in some of the situations in which chance may cast him.*

THE SON OF OCEAN.

Son of the rough and roaring wave!
 To every clime and danger known,
Thy dauntless energy we crave;
 Thy dauntless energy we own—
Son of the sea! at that bright name
 The muses love their lyres to swell,
To deck the laurell'd wreath of fame,
 And deathless deeds of glory tell.

Son of the wildly-warring waste!
 Where ships in battle bold unite;
Where gallant hearts to quarters haste,
 Terrific frown, and frowning, fight;
But when the leeward flash is seen,
 And peace her soothing accents lend,
The son of ocean smiles serene
 And calls the vanquish'd foeman—" friend!"

Son of the howling mountain wave!
 Where thunders roll, and lightnings flash,
Where loud the vext tornadoes rave,
 And spars descend and timbers crash—

Though long the wrecking ruin reigns,
  And wave on wave the deck o'erwhelm,
The son of ocean ne'er complains,
  But guides, with steady hand, his helm.

Son of the lofty-heaving deep!
  Where zephyr smiles through tempests steal,
Where, raved to rest, the billows sleep,
  Or murmur mildly round thy keel;
When virgin hopes, on shore, are strong
  To see again the sailor youth,
The son of ocean helms along,
  And sings of rosy love and truth.

Son of the flashing surge sublime!
  Where fiery flakes thy bows illume;
On shore, when flames infuriate climb
  And wrap in death the tottering dome;
When helpless beauty fearful sighs,
  And many a trembling prayer prefers,
The son of ocean hears her cries,
  And saves, or gives his life with hers.

Son of the waving waters wild!
  O'er which thy bark the breeze impels;
On shore, when lorn affliction's child
  With feeble voice and figure tells
How hard, though different once, she lives,
  By loss of friends and weight of years—
The son of ocean feels, and gives,
  If nothing else to give—his tears!

Son of this fondly favoring gale!
  That homeward on his quarter plays,
Thy name thy youthful minstrels hail
  In mingled songs of love and praise.
And, lo! thy happy natal shore,
  Where kindred dear, and true love dwell!
Where ocean waves are heard no more—
  Son of the dimpling flood farewell!

SEDLEY.


LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 491 931 2